

The F/X-files X-over

by Hawk

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The F/X-files X-over

The F/X-files X-over... by Niklas "Hawk" Jonsson (hawk@telia.com)

Title: The F/X-files X-over... [R]

> Author: Niklas "Hawk" Jonsson

> Summary:
 What happens when two Mutants, two FBI agents, two NYPD officers and two special effects wizards teams up. Will the veil of lies the two Mutants surrounds themselves with bring the whole team down? What are the three Immortals doing to do when they suddenly find themselves ending up in a prison? What is Cancerman going to do when his pack of Morleys are thrown into filthy trash? What will our team do when they all suddenly find themselves extremely aroused back at the penthouse they all share?

> People are having *sex* in this fanfic, consider yourselves warned...

> DISCLAIMER:
 Certain characters in this fanfic belong to either Chris Carter, 1013 Productions, Fox Television, Marvel Comics, Rysher entertainment, Hallmark entertainment, Mark Reinhausen, White Wolf Game studio or what/whoever else my greedy mind has ripped ideas or characters from. ;) HawkTech, The fairies, Erik and Niklas Jonsson are all mine though. If anyone is crazy enough to actually use them, hey go ahead but I want to know about it! :)

> I'm not to graphic (most of the time...), but there are some references to sex, violence and bad language in almost all my stories, this one is no exception. ;D I trust that you won't be too offended, it's all a part of life and I won't start edit things like this out of my stories just because some people don't like reading about it. You have been warned...
 I'm from Sweden so English is not my native lingo, please forgive any grammatical, spelling or whatever other errors I've made. Feel free to send me corrections if you want, my knowledge of foreign accents is also rather non-existent so some of the dialogue might seem strange.

> RATING:
 Hmmm, dunno really. R I think. Feel free to correct me if this is wrong.

> FEEDBACK:
 Greatly appreciated and *very* wanted, feel free to send anything except flames to:
> hawk@telia.com
 Or why not take a peek at my daily diary, new fanfics and stories at my homepage:
> <http://hem.passagen.se/hawkgts/>
> ARCHIVE:
 Go ahead, but I want to know about it first!
> THANKS:
 Everyone I know, everyone I'm related to, everyone I've ever met, everyone I've ever e-mailed or talked to over the telephone. A couple of big hugs and kisses goes out to all feedbackers.
> OTHER:
 This fanfic assumes that similar events as in the F/X fanfic "Sharing a bed" occurred with one important exception. Angie and Rollie did not jump into bed with each other in this universe. But they did meet Erik during the making of the movie "Le Mat - Assassin" where he played the leading role. One he knows *very* well since he really is Le Mat, an assassin so skilled and ruthless that he makes Victor Loubar seem like a newborn baby. The events in this story start involving Rollie&Angie almost two weeks after the events in the episode "Red storm".
> The X-files timeline is not set in any way, it could occur just about anytime "a few years" after Mulder&Scully first met each other.
 Highlandervise the time is set sometime after Duncan found out that Adam really is Methos, the oldest known Immortal. I'm also assuming that Connor has found out about this, but that he hasn't really learned to be comfortable around Methos.
> X-menwise, it's set right after the events in "First flight, take two...", comicbookwise this takes place around Onslaught, only Onslaught was destroyed before he ever managed to cause any real damage. (Except from sending Xavier into heavy angst that is...) Niklas recently (re)joined the X-men after returning from a future where he already had been a member of the X-men for a few months. He joined again, but nobody really trusts him. Especially not Emma Frost who were viciously attacked and threatened when she shut off his powers in an attempt to gain entry into his mind.
>
 "....." = Speech ("Hey Scully, how about a Big Mac for lunch?")
> *.....* = Strong words, Screams. ("I *hate* you Loubar!")
/...../ = Thoughts (/Jeez, Angie looks really good in that bikini. Yummy!/)
> +.....+ = SoundsRadio/Telephone/Computers (+boom+, +thud+, +clang+, +click+)
> *.../* = Telepathy (*/Yo Niklas, don't turn around now but Loubar is just behind you./*)
>

> Part one, Encounters...
>
 "Highlander!" Duncan stiffened and slowly turned around to face someone he hadn't seen in a long time. /Talbot!/ he thought in a slightly panicked state of mind. "We meet again Highlander." said Talbot stiffly. Duncans practiced eyes swept across his old foe and widened slightly as he realized that Talbot wasn't carrying a sword. He was dressed in a elegant dark blue suit, carried a small portfolio in his left hand. Most of his face was covered in his bright red beard, a large ugly scar went across his forehead. Duncan cursed himself, he should have been more alert then this. He had been so deeply submerged in his thoughts that he hadn't noticed the telltale buzz of another Immortal. That was the sort of carelessness that could lead to the loss of his head.
> "Long time, no see Talbot." said Duncan carefully, even if Talbot didn't seem anxious to fight right now, he couldn't dismiss the possibility that Talbot had helpers hidden away somewhere, just like

the last time they had faced off against each other.
 "You will see me, or one of my friends, very soon again Highlander. We know where you are now, you can't get away. If you survive today's encounter that is." spat Talbot with contempt. "Here is someone I don't think you have met before, but I think you know his father, after all, you killed him." said Talbot and smirked evilly. He stepped out of the dark alley and Duncan heard his steps echo as he moved away. Duncan threw all caution to the wind and pulled his sword out. /New York. Sometimes I think that there's more Immortals here then in the rest of the world added together./ he thought to himself as he tried to locate the Immortal he knew was somewhere in his vicinity. He turned against a dumpster where he had heard someone move, a second later a dark shape moved out from behind it, a old broadsword in his or her hands. As the shape moved out of the shadows, Duncan saw that it was a youngish looking man.

> "You killed my father you... you... murderer!" spat the other Immortal.
 "Who?" asked Duncan cautiously as he circled around, unwilling to make the first move.

> "You killed him... and you don't even know who he was? Die!" screamed the young man and charged. Of course, he could be even older then I am even if it's highly unlikely if he thinks I killed his "father"./ Duncan deftly parried the sweeping strike from his opponent only to be surprised by the sheer speed as the sword was pulled back and another strike initiated that Duncan was unable to parry. He winced as the heavy broadsword dug into his right arm. "That is just the beginning!" yelled his opponent and Duncan desperately parried another incredible swift cut. His opponent was faster then anyone Duncan had ever seen before, he handled the heavy broadsword as if it had been a rapier. The wide blade whizzed through the air with a speed Duncan was hard pressed to match. The only thing that saved him was the apparent inexperience of his opponent. If he was old, he couldn't have much experience of fencing, but he was blindingly fast. /Sweet Jesus!/ thought Duncan as the broadsword almost dug into his throat, if he hadn't stepped back, his head might very well have been lost. Duncan parried a powerful overhead chop, stepped in closer and pushed his opponent off balance with his shoulder. As the man staggered backwards, Duncan kicked his legs out from underneath him and stepped back to regain his breath. His opponent slowly got back on his feet and Duncan noticed that he was breathing heavily, he was drenched in sweat and his eyes were unfocused. He shook his head and stared madly at Duncan.

> "It was supposed to be finished by now..." he muttered and then charged again. Duncan clearly noticed a difference now, his opponent was slower, much slower. Duncan slapped the broadsword out of the way and then swung his sword back, passing the neck of his opponent on the way. He blinked in suprise, he had almost thought that it was a ruse, that his opponent had pretended to be slower just to catch Duncan by suprise. But he hadn't been fast enough to avoid this, his head dropped to the ground and his body followed a second later. Duncan took his sword in both hands, raised it to the skies and prepared himself for what was about to happened.

> Niklas stared down at the abruptly ended fight with fascination. He had been on his way back from feeding when he had been diverted by the sounds of steel hitting steel. He had leapt over the rooftops, heading in that direction only to find the two men down in the alley fighting with swords. He had watched the display in silence, not wanting to interfere. Now when it was all over though, he intended to question the winner, bring him in to justice if it was necessary. He patted the Katana he was carrying, hidden underneath his trenchcoat. He pulled out the Beretta 92F from his ankle-holster and made sure it

was loaded. It was almost ten meters down to the alley, a little to far to take in a single leap so Niklas aimed for the fire escape on the other side of the alley and was just about to jump when he suddenly felt it and saw the strange lights. The decapitated body was slowly rising into the air, strange lights were mysteriously flowing across the alley. The survivor looked as if he was in some kind of ecstasy, his eyes were wide open, his mouth was opened in silence as lights flowed into him from the dead body. Niklas leapt, halted his fall as his left hand shot out and grabbed the fire escape. He leapt the remaining four meters down and landed softly. He aimed his gun at the survivor who suddenly screamed, weather it was in pain or pleasure was impossible to tell. Niklas yelled in suprise as the glass in the windows overlooking the alley suddenly exploded, the fire escape flashed as if electricity was being directed through it, the container filled with garbage exploded and rotting garbage rained down all over the alley. Niklas closed his eyes and looked down to protect his eyes from the smelly downpour, when it seemed as if it was finally over, he looked up again as the unknown man was slowly standing up. He had apparently fallen down on his knees when Niklas attention had wandered.
 "Don't move mister." hissed Niklas and aimed his gun at the stranger. "Drop your sword, now!" The stranger slowly turned around, the sword still in his hands. "Drop it!" ordered Niklas again and slowly moved closer. "I don't know who you are mister, but I've got a lot of questions to ask you."

> "Are you law enforcement?" asked the stranger skeptically.
 "Not really. So you'd better drop that thing right now!" hissed Niklas and looked around swiftly. Heads were looking down at them from the broken windows, a few people were staring at them from the end of the alley. Niklas knew that the stranger moved before he saw it, he pulled back and squeezed the trigger.

> +boooooom+
 He saw the bullet hit it's victim in the left shoulder but a blink of an eye later, his pistol was torn from his right hand by a lightening fast sword. His left hand pulled out his own sword faster then lightening and a second later the two swords banged together between the two of them.

> "You hid your Quickening?!" exclaimed his opponent in suprise. My what?/ Niklas used all his skill, but he hadn't met an opponent this skilled ever before. Logan came close, but this guy was better. Niklas wasn't able to get his sword to touch his opponent, but his opponent hadn't managed to draw any blood yet either.

> "Who are you?" exclaimed Niklas as he crouched and kicked at his opponents legs. The stranger leapt back and his sword almost chopped Niklas leg off but he managed to pull it back without any worse damage then a cut in his trousers. He briefly considered using one of his Kindred disciplines to make himself faster, but he ignored that impulse. It was challenging, too challenging for him to consider cheating. Niklas had thought that his opponents damaged shoulder and arm would slow him down, but he blinked as he saw that the wounds had healed. A mutant with healing factor.../ he thought with suprise. /Why can't I feel him? My superpower sniffing ability ought to be able to locate him.../ wondered Niklas and gasped as his opponents sword slashed across his face. Niklas had pulled his head back in time, the wound wasn't very deep but it stung like hell.

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 "You'll pay for that." snarled Duncans opponent and Duncans knees almost caved in as he parried a very powerful overhand blow. Duncan hastily looked over their surroundings, he heard sirens coming closer. Some of the bystanders must have called the police. Duncan stepped back and then charged furiously, his sword moving in complex patterns with all the speed Duncan could muster. His opponent was definitively a experienced fighter, Duncan couldn't quite place his

style. He thought he could detect at least fifteen different techniques that he recognized and many more that he couldn't really place. /This guy must have been around for quite some time!/ Duncan looked up at his face again, the cut he had given his opponent was healing, no doubt about it. But it was slow, extremely slow and without the telltale blue lights as it healed. /It must have something to do with the fact that he's still hiding his Quickening./ thought Duncan and grunted in satisfaction as his sword plunged into his opponents chest.

>
 Niklas gasped in pain as the sword dug into his chest, he snarled like an animal and struck his opponent with a powerful left uppercut. His opponent flew backwards and the sword was torn out of the chest, Niklas went down on his knees and gasped. /This guy is dangerous!/ He staggered up to his feet and raised his sword as his opponent slowly made it back to his feet, Niklas noticed the sirens though. They were really close now, he couldn't afford to hang around here any more. "We'll meet again." he growled and sheathed his sword. He leapt up into the air, grabbed the fire escape and pulled himself up. He climbed up a ways and then leapt over to the other side of the alley and pulled himself up on the roof. He didn't look back as he ran as fast as he could, he couldn't afford being arrested and revealed as a mutant vampire.

>
 "Bloody 'ell!" exclaimed Duncan as he staggered up the fire escape, he winced as a bullet dug into his left leg.

> "Freeze!" screamed one of the policemen down in the alley. A second bullet grazed his back the second before he threw himself up on the roof. He looked over to the other side of the alley without finding his mysterious opponent. He had gotten away, Duncan just hoped that he could do the same. He used the gun his opponent had dropped to blast away the bolts that held the fire escape in place, it started to wobble and Duncan pushed it away from the wall. The landlord is going to get a lot of crap for this./ though Duncan absently, the fire escape was the crappiest he had ever seen. He grunted in satisfaction as the wobbly thing collapsed and crashed down into the alley, he heard the pained screams and ragged gasps of the officers who had been buried underneath it all, he hoped that they would be all right. He wobbled away and jumped from building to building. His jaw still hurt, he thought it was broken. That stranger had packed a mean punch, Duncan had landed almost four meters from the place he had been standing. His sword in his hands only because he had held it in a very tight grip that hadn't let go of the sword despite the excruciating pain from the unexpected blow. /We'll meet again he said./ thought Duncan, he would be looking forward to it. This guy intrigued him, he would ask Joe Dawson about him, perhaps the Watchers knew something about this mysterious Immortal.

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 Dana Katherine Scully walked into the office and knew at once that her partner had a new case all prepared. She saw it in the way he was sitting, the way he turned around and smiled when he saw her. /Oh god, it's another one of 'those' cases./ she thought as she saw that smile. The smile he only smiled when it was something really crazy going on. It wasn't his "There's aliens involved, perhaps I can find out something about my sister" smile, it was his "It's so darn crazy that we just have to look into this" smile. During the years since she first stepped into this office, she had learned to interpret him better than anyone, she knew him almost as good as she knew herself.

> "All right Mulder, what is it? I know it's not aliens, perhaps it is... Let's see... Poltergeists?" she asked and shook her head when she saw him. "Noo, no poltergeists. How about buildings moving on

their own?" He smiled even wider, not his "She's right" smile, it was his "She's *way* off on this one" smile. "All right, I give up." she said and fought to keep a smile off her own lips. Damn but he's cute, sometimes I just want too.../ She stopped that thought before it got out of hand. She furiously hoped that she wasn't blushing, it wasn't proper, thinking about her partner in that manner. But it was getting harder and harder for every day that passed, the secret line that separated friends from lovers was getting harder to see for every day that passed. She sometimes caught herself looking at Mulder with desire in her eyes, feeling herself wanting him more than anything else. She sometimes felt him looking at her as well, but she hadn't been able to look up or turn around fast enough to see how he looked at her. She cleared her mind from those thoughts, she shouldn't be thinking them.

> "No, no poltergeists or buildings with feet." he said and reached out behind him, he grabbed a thick pile of papers from his desk and held it up beside him. "Do you know what this is?" he asked and wiggled the pile of papers.
 "No." she admitted.

> "Each and every single one of these papers represent a murder. The last five years, there's been 189 murders where the corpse has been beheaded under mysterious circumstances." he said and slammed the wad of papers down on his desk with a booming sound.
 "What mysterious circumstances?" asked Dana, her curiosity piqued.

> "Strange lights, explosions without explosives, cars destroyed, windows blown out from every single window in the vicinity, reports about bodies levitating, men and women fighting with swords. At 2.27 Saturday morning, the police arrived at an alley in the Bronx. Several people had called because their windows had shattered, their lights had went out. Two men playing poker claimed to have seen two people down in the alley fencing. One guy decapitated the other and a few seconds after that, the windows burst, strange lights flowed down in the alley and a container exploded. Eye witnesses on the street reported the same thing. Seconds after this, a third man aimed a gun at the killer. They screamed at each other before the man with the sword slapped the gun out of the third guys hand. A shot went off and no less than nine people swear that a bullet struck the fencers left shoulder. The man with the gun also pulled out a sword and they fenced for a while until the killer shoved his sword into the chest of the man with the gun. The wounded man threw a punch that made his opponent fly almost five meters backwards, still with the sword in his hands. The guy with the wound in his chest sheathed his sword, jumped three meters up into the air onto a fire escape, climbed a little bit higher, jumped six meters over to the other side of the alley and hoisted himself up onto the roof of the building there and vanished. The other man sheathed his sword, picked up the gun and made his way up the fire escape. The police arrived and shot him four times, but he still managed to get up onto the roof where he sabotaged the fire escape. It crashed down on the police officers, killing one of them and seriously injured another. Both men are still at large and unknown at the moment." he finished. "I arrived here yesterday at nine in the morning and did some research, this is just the cases from the last five years." he said and gestured at the pile of papers. He pointed to a pile of books and printouts that seemed just on the verge of falling down. He picked up the book on top. "This book describes how roughly the same thing happened in France, only this occurred the year 985. The first of these mysterious beheadings with following fireworks that I have managed to find happened threehundred years before Christ." He carefully picked out two books from the pile but it fell over anyway, he didn't appear to care much as it spread out all over the floor and his desk. Scully

looked closer at the books, they both seemed very old and very valuable. He put them beside each other and opened them at spots he had marked with pieces of paper. "Look at these pictures Scully." he said and pointed at a page in each book. She bent down and tore her eyes away from his masculine hands to look at the pictures. They both resembled a man in his thirties, dark hair and a appealing face. She didn't doubt for a second that it was the same man on both pictures even if his haircut was slightly different. Mulder then placed a fax next to the two books, she looked at that as well. It was the same man again, once again with his hair in a slightly different manner.
 "It's the same guy." she simply said. Mulder smiled at her, it was his "I've got you now" smile, a slightly gloating one filled with mirth at the fact that he had her just where he wanted. He pointed at the first book.

> "This book was written by a French monk in 1741." He pointed to the second book. "This one was written by a Arabic merchant in 1832." He pointed at the fax. "This is the image the police scetch artists came up with from the witnesses descriptions yesterday. The two books describe how this fellow decapitated someone with his sword and the strange phenomenon's afterwards. He turned a page in the book written by the Arabic merchantman and pointed at the drawing of a sword on the other page. "This is the sword he used, it fits the description of the sword the monk claimed that he used and it fits the description of the sword used in the latest murder. It's the same man!" said Mulder, almost jumping with excitement.
 "That's... impossible." exclaimed Scully. "He would have to be more then two hundred years old. It goes against all logical..." she fell silent. "Just like half of all the other cases in here." she said sourly and gestured around the room. "When do we leave?" she asked, knowing that Mulder had already made up his mind. She also couldn't help being curious about this weird case, she had faced a lot of things that was flat out impossible in the past, that someone was more then twohundred years old and still fit to run around decapitating people wasn't that strange compared to some of the others things she and Mulder had investigated.

> "Well, the car is stocked with snacks, I've talked to Skinner and my suitcase is already in the trunk." said Mulder and his eyes sparkled, this was just the sort of cases he enjoyed the most. As do I./ admitted Dana silently to herself.

> "You could have warned me in advance, you were here all Sunday after all." she complained and looked around the room. "From all the junk in here, I'd guess you were here all night as well."
 "Call of duty, an FBI agent never sleeps."

> "No, he just passes out in the middle of the day from lack of sleep." she retorted.
 "I'd rather pass out with you then anyone else." he said and winked at her.

> "Don't get your hopes up 'Spooky', what sort of girl do you think I am?"
 "A bad one, I thought we'd already established that."

> "Tell you what, you clean this mess up and I'll go home and pack. When you're ready, come by my apartment and then you can sleep while I drive." she suggested.
 "It's a deal." he agreed and looked around with a frown. "I really did make a mess of the place, didn't I?" he asked and shook his head.

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 "Here's your target." said David Talbot and threw the file over to the man on the other side of the table. "I placed a tracker on him, with this device you'll be able to follow him." he said and slided a little electronic device over the table. "He's only here temporarily and since he knows that I'm after him, he'll probably move around a lot."

> "Any fancies?" asked Victor Loubar as he looked the device over.
 "Not really, grenades, a shot in the head, a bomb, sniping, knife or whatever, it really doesn't matter. Just do it."

> "The money?" David sneered and slowly pulled out a thick envelope from his portfolio. He handed it over.
 "I don't work for pennies." said the man without even looking inside the envelope.

> "Inside, you'll find ten thousand dollars as a proof of my good intentions. You'll also find all information necessary for you to use a bank account in a very helpful little bank in the Caymans. There's one million dollars in the account, if you succeed, I'll make it another one." said the man simply. Victor Loubar looked doubtful but he finally nodded and put the envelope inside his trenchcoat. Talbot left with a slight nod, never really taking any notice of the small disgusting fly that was sitting on Loubars left shoulder as he quickly browsed through the file. He had a few more meetings scheduled today, he wanted MacLeod suffering, his last days in life spent like a hunted animal. The tracker David had fired into his leg with the rifle hidden in his portfolio made sure that he would be easy to find, he would become hunted like an animal, never allowed to rest. David smiled as he thought about it, he had spent years preparing this moment. The Immortals he had gathered, all of them with one or another reason to hate MacLeod, the mercenaries he had hired, the equipment he had gathered. He pulled out a small jar, filled with a dark fluid. The drug I researched./ he thought and smirked. The effects wore off quickly, but while it lasted it made the one who had injected it faster, much faster. It had it's downsides though, it burnt a lot of energy, so once the effects wore off, it would turn the one taking it sluggish, tired and unable to really concentrate for hours. He wasn't planning on using it himself, but he had offered the ones after MacLeods head a dose if they wanted one. It increased the chance of a fast victory, but if the fight took more then a few minutes, they didn't have a chance in hell of keeping their heads over their shoulders.

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 "Well mister Duncan MacLeod, you are dead, whoever you are." muttered Victor Loubar and stabbed his finger between the eyes of the photograph in the file. "When you're out, I'll do Rollie Tyler." He hadn't planned on taking another assignment, but after the warehouse with all his equipment blew up and his three hirelings ended up in the hospital, he couldn't go on with his plans for Rollie Tyler until he had replaced the equipment anyway. So when this person called him up and requested his services, Loubar accepted. He briefly considered to actually drink the cup of coffee he had ordered, but there was no telling what might have been put in it. It might be poisoned and Victor didn't intend to take any chances, the client had picked this place to meet in so Victor automatically treated it like a hostile zone. He picked up the file and got up, he absently brushed an annoying fly off his shoulder and then walked out, without noticing that the fly followed him and settled down on his right shoulder until it was caught in a sudden gust of wind and pushed off. Someone who had been able to follow the fly's slightly panicked movements would have seen it fly around like crazy, gain altitude and slowly spin around, as if it was searching for something. When it apparently didn't find this something, it followed the street until it found a small time hoodlum loosely connected to the mob. The small fly settled down in the mans curly black hair. If the same someone who could have been able to follow the fly had possessed the ability to move in closer, see the fly up close, would be suprised to notice that the fly wasn't organic. It's tiny legs were made out of metal and equipped with small metallic claws. The wings were made out of an plastic-metallic alloy unknown to the general population, the eyes

were in reality the lenses of a camera so small that it was able to fit into the head of the tiny construct. The rest of the "fly" consisted out of circuits, engines and a satellite uplink that connected it to what looked like a common communication satellite. What was unusual about this particular satellite was that it didn't belong to any country, news network or a research laboratory. If it hadn't employed stealth technology and transmissions sent on a frequency that no other devices were able to, it might have been noticed and confused with a spy satellite. That guess wouldn't have been far off... The images from the camera in the tiny "fly" was sent scrambled over to the satellite who sent the signal back towards earth, down to a satellite dish on top of a nondescript skyscraper on Manhattan. It was passed along super- conductive shielded cables down to a computer, in front of that computer sat what looked like any other simple secretary or perhaps accountant. The eyes of this man never left the monitor in front of him, showing not only the images the camera in the fly recorded at the moment, but also a plethora of various readings that revealed the speed the fly moved in, the angles, the wind around the fly, temperature and the amount of energy left before the fly would run out and simply fall to the ground. The man held two joysticks in his two hands, his feet were placed on two pedals and all this controlled the so called "Flycam", currently seated in the hair of a mobster. The information that was of any interest was passed along the network over to a small groups of computers where it was categorized and stored on the enormously large harddrives for possible future use. Before the computers left the information completely alone, a voice>text conversion program as well as a image>text conversion programs processed the information and compared it to a few lists with keywords. It would have passed through relatively unnoticed if it wasn't for the fact that one of the list with keywords had the name Rollie Tyler in it. This caused an e-mail to be sent where it notified the receiver that a video clip where the name Rollie Tyler was mentioned was available. The e-mail was opened within seconds, the clip was opened two seconds later and caused the one watching it snarl in wrath. A little searching revealed that the watcher wasn't the only one who had shown interest in Rollie Tyler lately, the watcher now knew that his own cousin had discovered a certain Victor Loubars wish to crush Rollie Tyler. A extended search on events concerning Victors latest employee and target revealed a video of the swordfight, the watcher gasped as he saw his cousin trying to apprehend Victors target and the following fight. Erik Jonsson smiled, he wouldn't mind a little assistance and he knew that his cousin could provide him with as good assistance as any he could get within his organization, probably better. His almost unrivaled skills in swordplay would probably come in handy when there were Immortals involved. He just hoped that Niklas would be able to sneak away from the X-men for a while.

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> Part 2, Joining forces...

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 "Go back there? Are you crazy? People will recognize me!" exclaimed Niklas and looked accusingly at his cousin.

> "I've checked the police reports, nobody got a good look at you during the entire fight. Here's the scetch the police are working after at the moment." he said and pulled out a drawing from his coat pocket. Niklas took the paper and studied it.
 "Looks like Robert Redford." he commented after a while. "People must be blind." he remarked and shook his head in confusion. "Black hair? This guy looks like he's in his early fifties for gods sake! Do you have the one of the other guy?" asked Niklas suddenly.

> "I can do better then that, here's the file we have on him

including his picture." said Erik and pulled out a thin folder from his briefcase.
 "Duncan MacLeod, a picture, a small list of places he might visit here in New York and some rumors of sightings. 'Immortal, one of the ten most likely to survive The Gathering?'" quoted Niklas. "What is this crap? Immortal? The Gathering?"

> "You don't know? I figured you Vampires should have at least some knowledge of these dudes."
 "I might have had, but I lost a lot of shit from my head in that other world. I don't have any now, that much is for sure anyway." replied Niklas slowly.

> "Well, Immortal is just about what it sounds like, almost. They can heal any wound in record time, any wound except a head severed from the body that is. From what I've noticed, it's the only sure way of killing one of them. Blow them apart, they will heal. Burn them, they will regenerate the lost tissue. Throw them to starved animals and they will chew for a while, then refuse to eat no matter how hungry they get. Lost flesh regenerates. Shoot them, they flinch and two minutes later there's no wound. Poison, alcohol, viruses, mind control and whatever you care to mention, they burn off the effects sooner or later even if it seems like they can become addicted to drugs'n shit like that. It seems like all Immortals are waiting for something called 'The Gathering'. It's supposed to be some big meeting where they fight until the end, until there's only one of them left alive. It's unclear what will happen then, apparently it's supposed to bring great powers, Omnipotence even." Erik shrugged. "It's all based on the accounts of a Immortal we took prisoner and did some research on a year or so ago, how much and what is the truth, well, we just don't know."
 "I can't recall seeing any of this in the HawkTech files I've read." said Niklas slowly and his stomach churned at the thoughts of the "research" on the Immortal prisoner. /Poor bastard!/ he thought in disgust.

> "Probably depends on the fact that it's not commonly available. Some of the stuff I don't even think my own organization is capable to handle is stored in my own private computer, not connected to the HawkTech or any other network. Some things about the Kindred I don't want to be common knowledge, Immortals, magic and a few other little tidbits that the world isn't prepared to handle at the moment."
 "I have to check it out sometime. Anyway, when is this Gathering?" asked Niklas curiously.

> "No idea, it could be over already for all I know. It could be thousands of years into the future, it might never happen. Who can tell? But the information we have gathered, both from our prisoner and other sources indicate that Duncan MacLeod is someone who has a *very* good chance of surviving until the final gathering."
 "If it's thousands of years into the future, he's going to have one hell of a hard time surviving until then." smirked Niklas.

> "Perhaps not, you see, Immortals don't age. An Immortal we have more information on is at least ninehundred years old, as long as they keep their heads attached to their bodies, nothing can stop them from surviving." Erik looked annoyed for a few moments. "Just got an e-mail, a FBI team is going to look into the shit that happened here. Normally, I wouldn't worry too much about it. But these two are a little... unconventional."
 "Mutant Affairs?"

> "No, but they're certainly weird enough to fit in there, no these guys are from something called 'The X-files'. They are the whole department, two Special Agents. No clerks, no budget to talk about, just a basement and two people. I haven't managed to find out much about it, but I've picked up a lot of rumors about them. But no matter how much they seem like total loco's, they do get results. I wouldn't put it past them to actually manage to find something out in this sordid little affair. Perhaps I should have them assassinated?"

mused Erik seriously. Niklas shook his head.
 "How about teaming up with them? That way we know everything they find out, we'll know what they are planning and how much they know."

> "Teaming up with them? Masquerade as government agents?"
 "Yeah, why not? We could pose as FBI-agents from Mutant Affairs, the paranormal happenings after a beheading *could* indicate mutant activity, checking it out by sending a team from Mutant Affairs seems reasonable."

> "How do you suppose we might pull that one off then? Do you have any contacts in the FBI that I don't know about?" asked Erik smugly.
 "Nah, but you do. I came up with the idea, you make sure we can pull it off." replied Niklas with a pleased smile. "Shared responsibilities y'know?"

>

>
 Mulder jumped in his seat and awoke from his slumber covered in sweat. /Samantha!/ he thought and shivered nervously.

> "Your phone Mulder..." said Scully and Mulder nodded. He pulled out his telephone from his pocket and hit the reply button.
 "Mulder." The conversation over the telephone was rather one-sided since it was the assistant director Walter Skinner in the other end, Mulder grunted and gave one-syllable replies and finished with a disgruntled 'Bye.' before he hung up.

> "What's the matter Mulder?" asked his partner, the gorgeous Dana Scully. He tried to filter away the gorgeous part from his thoughts, she was his partner, nothing else.
 "That was Skinner on the phone, we are going to team up with another set of agents on this case."

> "From Violent Crimes?" asked Scully curiously but kept her mind mostly on the driving.
 "No, Mutant Affairs. They seem to think that the fireworks afterwards have something to do with mutant powers." he snorted.

> "Well, it might. You know that a large part of our 'strange' cases has involved mutants in one way or another. Telepaths, telekinesis, pyrokinesis, rapid healing, shapeshifting and so on, this might very well be the case here as well." said Dana reasonably.
 "I know, I know." sighed Mulder.

> "But you don't think so?"
 "Some of the incidents described happened hundreds of years ago, there weren't many mutants around back then, most of them have manifested the last twenty or thirty years or so. Some of the people back in the middle ages who were accused of witchcraft and black magic might have been mutants, but there isn't any proof of that. Scientists say that mutants are a recent thing, the older events I've found cannot have mutants involved unless mutants evolved a lot sooner then commonly believed."

> "So, where are we meeting them?" asked Scully.

> "Nice view." commented Mulder as he looked out through the window. "Hey, the garden is just across the street." he murmured. "There was a beheading in the garage there in... 1984 I think it was. A second beheading followed shortly afterwards, the culprit was identified as a man named Victor Kruger who lost his own head before he could be arrested. All three of these beheadings were followed by the strange phenomenon's." he explained as he looked out through the window.
 "When Mutant Affairs plan an operation, they sure do it with flair. Renting the penthouse of a classy hotel, eight separate bedrooms and just look at the bathrooms!" exclaimed Scully, he wasn't sure if she had been listening to him or not. "This sure is a *long* step from our usual sleazy motels." she said and nodded appreciative.

> "One of the upsides of having a large budget." said Mulder neutrally. But he was confused, he wouldn't have thought that Mutant

Affairs could afford to throw their money around like this even if they had a enormous budget. "Shall we go take a look at that alley? The other team clearly isn't here and hasn't left any messages for us either."
 "All right, but lets unpack and give them a chance to show up first Mulder, it would be disrespectful to begin without them."

> "Okay Sku-leeh." he replied. "Whatever." He frowned suspiciously. "This wouldn't have anything to do with the bathtubs in the bathrooms now would it?"
 "I'll only take a quick bath." said Scully and looked at him, pleading silently with her eyes. He couldn't resist her when she did that, he couldn't resist her when she wasn't either but he didn't want to think about that.

> "Want some company? Those tubs look big enough for two."
 "In your dreams Mulder, in your dreams."

> "Yeah... probably." he said with a dreamy smile.

> "Found anything?" asked Scully after looking through the entire alley. "Mulder?" she asked when she didn't see her partner.
 "Up here Scully." he replied and Scully looked up to see him standing on a ladder almost up in roof level with one of the buildings that created this alley.

> "What are you doing up there Mulder?" she asked curiously as she looked upwards.
 "The guy who jumped from the fire escape pulled himself up here. Do you want to hear something spooky Scully?"

> "What?" asked Scully in a resigned note.
 "There are claw-marks here, the guy didn't quite make it from the looks of it. But it looks as if he scratched his way up to the roof. There's blood here, but not as much as expected from someone who just took a sword right through his chest.

> "Claws?" asked Scully. "What are you talking about Mulder?"
 "I'm telling you, this guy must have had claws, either natural or some sort of tool to simplify climbing. I'd guess that his jump was about a feet to low. He used the clawthingies to reach the roof and then pulled himself up. I'll get some samples for you." he said and put some fragments down into a small plastic bag he pulled out from one of his pockets. When he was finished, he slowly made his way down again. "Will you catch me in your strong arms if I fall Scully?" he asked and smiled down at her.

> "Don't fall and you'll never have to find out if I would have caught you or not." she retorted.

> ***

> *Flashback from scenes in or around events in "First flight, take two..." available on my homepage for the curious ones.*

> Angie Ramirez shivered slightly as someone stepped out of the shadows on her side of the street and waved at her. She thought he looked slightly familiar but she couldn't quite remember where she might have seen him before. She slowed in and halted a few meters away from him, even though he seemed to radiate honesty and friendliness he certainly didn't look that way in his black clothes, trenchcoat and shades.
 "Hey miss, I was wondering if you'd like to do me a favor?" he asked sweetly. She looked around, trying to locate any possible ambush or anything else out of the ordinary.

> "What sort of favor?" she asked cautiously.
 "Put this letter in the mailbox over at Tyler FX." he said and held out a simple envelope and a hundred dollar bill. Angie tensed at once but tried not to show it. /Why can't he deliver it himself?/ she wondered and looked more closely at him. He saw her study and moved back a step where the shadows hid more of his features.

> "Why can't you do it yourself?" she asked suspiciously.
 "I don't want to get involved, but that is none of your concern. Deliver this letter and the hundred dollar bill is yours." he said and held

the envelope and the bill up in front of him. He bent the envelope, pressed it together and even opened it to show her the simple printout in it. She was too far away to see what it said though. "See, no bomb. No poison on the paper. No hidden needles or anything like that. Just deliver a simple letter and you'll be able to shove this hundred dollar bill into your wallet. Here, I'll leave it here on this parking meter and move away so I won't be able to grab you or anything." he said, left the envelope and the bill on the meter and backed several meters.

> "How do you know that I won't just run off with it?" asked Angie.
> "I don't. But it is a matter of life and death, it is very important that Rollie Tyler reads this as soon as possible." said the stranger and folded his arms. "I won't pay you more if that is what you're waiting for, sooner or later I'll find someone else willing to deliver this letter. But if Rollie dies because he didn't get it in time, you're the one responsible." he said coldly and Angie shivered. She grabbed the letter and bladed over towards the loft as fast as she could. She didn't care to grab the bill so that fell to the ground behind her. She looked behind her and noticed the stranger bend down to pick the bill up, no sign of pursuit or anyone else nearby.

> "Blue, open!" she shouted and heard the click as the door was unlocked.
> +thunk+

> Angie stared as a throwing knife with a hundred dollar bill pinned on it struck the door.
> "You forgot your money!" shouted the stranger and then disappeared into the shadows. Angie carefully took the knife down with a handkerchief preventing her hands from touching it. Perhaps she could get Francis and Mira to dust it for fingerprints. She removed the bill and put that tucked underneath the knife. The bill did have the stranger's fingerprints on it, of that she was sure because she had seen him hold it. She stepped inside and looked around the loft, she didn't see Rollie anywhere and there was a note taped on her workstation that said he was out shopping. Angie sat down in the sofa and opened the envelope, she carefully took out the letter. She was wearing gloves just so she wouldn't put her prints all over it.

>

> Rollie Tyler.
>

> You don't know me and you probably don't have any reason to trust me, but I have to try anyway. Your life is in danger, when I was conducting my affairs, I happened to stumble across a warehouse where I encountered three persons talking. They had been hired by an international terrorist I think you might know, a certain Victor Loubar. They were talking about how they had been hired to act as decoys when this Victor Loubar was going to take his revenge out on a certain Rollie Tyler. I checked all Rollie Tylers in USA and you were the only one who has had any dealings with Victor Loubar in the past that I could find. The three decoys are probably in a hospital right now where they are being treated for a mysterious loss of blood, if the police and the fire department was alert enough, they should have found them next to a burning warehouse earlier today. The warehouse and a lot of equipment that Loubar had gathered was destroyed in the fire so he'll probably have to spend quite some time getting replacements for the destroyed gadgets, but if you are the correct Rollie Tyler, he'll probably still try to get his revenge on you.
> Stay alert.

>

> Angie reread the note once again and then put it back into the envelope. Loubar.../ She shivered and wiped a few drops of perspiration from her forehead with the back of her left hand. She

hadn't really believed that he had been killed, the only thing that would have been enough to convince her would have been to see his rotten corpse with her own eyes. If the letter had warned for any other threat, she would have laughed it off. But even if she had received this strange warning in a very suspicious way, she decided to treat it like the real thing.

> "Blue, open." She jumped as she heard the muffled voice of her partner, Rollie Tyler outside the door. After a second or two, he kicked the door open and walked in with his arms filled with large bags.
 "Ang." he greeted her. "Great, can you help me out a little here" he asked and kicked the door shut behind him as he tried to balance the mountain of things in his arms. She carefully relieved him of a few bags and he sighed in relief.

> "Rol." She didn't quite know how to start, so she just said it. "Loubar is back."
 +clong+ +bonk+ +thud+ +crash+ +bing+ +thud+ +crash+

> Angie yelped in surprise as Rollie dropped his bags and stared at her with his eyes wide open. The floor was a mess and he was standing in a puddle of ruined foodstuffs and FX supplies, people would have been surprised to know how much of their effects were created with the aid of things anyone could buy at a common grocery shop.

> "How did you know?" he asked and blinked in surprise. "Was he here?!" he asked and scanned the area and her with piercing eyes, a look filled with concern, worry, love and a hate-fueled rage that almost scared her when she saw it in his eyes. She calmed herself and studied him closer.
 "You don't seem very surprised by this." she said calmly, trying to keep her voice from sounding accusing. He lowered his gaze and swallowed.

> "Ever since he got away... I've kept my eyes out, tried to track him down." admitted Rollie. "I got a pretty good tip earlier today when you decided to go rollerblading. He was apparently holed up in some old warehouse, but it was burning as I got there. The fire department and police was all over it, so I couldn't even get close. Sorry Ang."
 "You've been trying to find Loubar for almost two weeks... Without telling me about it?" asked Angie and this time she didn't care that she sounded accusing. "Rollie!" He tensed and looked really guilty and miserable as she gazed straight at him. "We agreed! We agreed that we weren't going to let him take over our lives, we were just going to drop it all, drop it!"

> "You agreed, I never did. He *will* die for what he did." said Rollie and his eyes shone with hatred. She sighed, it was no use arguing about it now. "How did you know? The last thing Mira found out was that he had left town and I haven't been telling either her or Francis about my private search yet."
 "I was asked to deliver a letter to you, since it was so suspicious, I read it." admitted Angie and told Rollie all about the strange encounter.

> "Where was the police unit? They're supposed to keep an eye on you all the time." commented Rollie after reading the strange message.
 "I got tired of having a car following me everywhere I went, so I lost 'em in order to blade in private." replied Angie. "Don't come wining about it!" she snapped before he had time to say anything. "You know as well as I that if the situation was the other way around, you'd sneak away from your guardians as soon as you got the chance. Besides, if the police leave, we're supposed to call for another unit or stay here with the door locked. You just left." Rollie sighed and Angie nodded, he couldn't complain about her behavior when he wasn't behaving himself. He looked at the letter again and read it over one more time.

> "So he really did use that warehouse. I guess I have to tell Francis and Mira about this, they need to question his helpers.

Perhaps they know something, this letter and the knife has to be dusted for prints. The guy who warned me might know something else, something that can lead us to Loubar."

> "Well?" Rollie asked as Mira and Francis arrived the day afterwards. He had been up all night, trying to locate Loubar. He didn't really think he would, but he just couldn't bear the thought of sleeping in his bed. The same bed Angie and Loubar used.../ he thought and felt his stomach heave. He tore his mind away from it, if he dwelled more upon it he would have to throw up in front of his friends.

> "Hell Rollie, you look like hell!" exclaimed Mira. "Where's Angie?"
 "Still asleep in the extra bed you brought." replied Rollie and yawned. "Well, what did you find out?" he repeated, he wouldn't let them get off track.

> "The helpers didn't know anything of importace, they only met him once and never did find out what he had planned. They were supposed to have a briefing with him, but something happened. They were waiting for Loubar when the man was struck by an electrical surge that dropped him to the floor. The women spun around and barely managed to see a man reaching out for them as they too dropped to the floor. All three had been electrocuted, not lethal, only a stunning amount that rendered them completely unable to move. Then they all got a whack in the head that knocked them unconscious. They didn't come too until at the hospital." explained Francis.
 "They were all more or less all right, but the man had lost a lot of blood. The doctors were baffled, he didn't have any injuries and he had been examined by his personal doctor just a week earlier and was perfectly healthy then. Here's a scetch of the description the women gave on the man they saw." said Mira and showed them a crude drawing. Rollie studied it, the man looked slightly familiar but he couldn't quite place him.

> "He looks... I feel like I should know him. I have seen that jaw and the nose before, where have I seen it?" wondered Rollie out loud. He heard a gasp behind him and was suprised to see Angie standing behind him, looking at the picture he was holding. "Morning Ange, didn't know you were awake." he said.
 "That's him! That's the guy who left the message!" exclaimed Angie. "Sunglasses and all!"

> "Are you sure?" asked Rollie at the same time as Francis and Mira asked the very same thing.
 "Well, it's no photo. But it sure looks like him anyway." said Angie and studied the drawing more closely. "I just wish I could figure out who he reminds me of." she exclaimed. "It's driving me crazy!"

> "You recognize him too?" asked Rollie and looked at the drawing again. "I thought I had seen him before somewhere, but now that you mention it, it's probably just that he reminds me of someone."
 "We're both right..." mumbled Angie. "I know that he reminds me of someone, but I have seen him as well somewhere. But who is it that he reminds me of and where have I seen this guy before?"

>
 * End of flashback sequence*

>
 Mira looked down at the corpse and shuddered, the cut that had sewered his head from his body was clean as a whistle, it looked so clean and even that she suspected it had been the work of a laser or a surgeon with access to proper equipment. It didn't look like a wound she expected to see from what apparently had been a duel with swords. There hadn't been any witnesses to this one, not any of the weird electric disturbances that had accompanied the latest beheading either. /Just two men who suddenly decided to try and kill each other with swords./ she thought dryly. /What is wrong with the world? Why swords? Why not guns, knives, grenades or whatever? Walking around with a sword and keep it hidden from plain view must be bloody

difficult./

> "Mira? Look over there." said Francis suddenly and Mira turned around and looked at the two men in suits, bent over something a little ways off.
 "Who are they?" she asked suspiciously as she looked at them. /Suits. Impeccable. Government, maybe the feds./ she concluded to herself before he answered. /Why do I get the feeling that I've seen them before?/ she asked herself as she tried to get some answers from her subconscious without succeeding.

> "Dunno, I didn't see them here before." he replied hesitantly and moved towards them as Mira moved closer, but kept behind him. Prepared to give him cover if it turned out to be necessary.
 "This is a sealed area gentlemen. Unless you can give me some proper ID's, I'm afraid you'll have to leave." said Francis in his calm, yet commanding voice. The two men slowly rose and turned around. What Mira first noticed was their looks, they were almost mirror images of each other. The only thing that truly set them apart were the fact that one wore a pair of black sunglasses, the other didn't. At her second review, she noticed that the one with the glasses had slightly shorter hair and didn't appear to care much about shaving. It was apparent that he hadn't shaved for at least a week. She also noticed another thing, the one without the sunglasses had one green eye and the other one had one of those funny lenses that youngsters found so amusing, it was a yellow smiley face. She blinked in surprise as she saw it, it didn't seem to fit with the expensive suit he was wearing. He winked at Francis with his smiley-eye and smiled as he slowly reached into the side pocket of his pants and whipped out his wallet.

> "Special Agent Tom Olsen of the FBI." The other one also brought out a wallet and flipped it open, revealing another badge and an FBI ID-card.
 "Special Agent Jim Olsen, I'm with the Jehovah Shriners." he said with an amused chuckle.

> "I thought the FBI wasn't supposed to have humor." commented Palmira and smiled despite herself.
 "Occasionally, one gets through the system." replied Tom dryly. "He just doesn't know when to quit. So miss and mister NYPD, what can you tell us about the recent beheadings?"

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>
 "Agents Mulder and Scully?" asked Erik as he stepped into the hotel room he had arranged to function as a temporary base of operations. The two people sitting at a table in there got up on their feet and nodded. "Pleased to meet you, I'm Special Agent Tom Olsen and this is Special Agent Jim Olsen." he said and indicated Niklas who walked in after him. Niklas smiled at the mention of their false identities, he didn't care much for the idea of posing as brothers but they were too much alike to pretend being unrelated. The problem was that the FBI would never team up two people with such a close personal relation as partners. They walked up to the two real FBI agents to greet them up close. Erik took the hand of the man, a tall dark-haired guy.

> "Special Agent Fox Mulder" he introduced himself. Erik moved on to the woman and Niklas reached out to shake hands. Mulder repeated his introduction.
 "Hey, we've got the same first two names." said Niklas with a slight smile. Fox Mulder returned it and his eyes sparkled. Niklas turned to the woman, a lovely rather short red-haired woman with a quiet sensuality.

> "Special Agent Dana Scully, MD." she introduced herself.
 "The love doctor..." said Niklas with a smile that lighted up the whole room. He saw Fox tense out of the corner of his eyes. /Ouch, sore spot there. Mental note, do not hit on the doctor./

> "Hardly, she slices and dices up dead bodies." said Mulder and

smiled in what most likely was an attempt to hide his feelings on Niklas friendliness towards Scully. Niklas noted at once how he stepped up closer and sort of hovered over Dana Scully.
 "Are you two related?" asked Dana as she looked between Niklas himself and Erik.

> "Brothers actually." replied Erik. "We're not usually teamed up like this, but my partner ended up at the hospital after a confrontation with a telekinetic, Jim's partner went on a vacation so they made an exception and sent us out to investigate the mutant decapitator."
 "I don't think it's a mutant." said Fox suddenly and picked up a wad of papers from the table he and his partner had been sitting at when Niklas and Erik arrived. Niklas and Erik swiftly leafed through the research the agents had managed to gather up. They exchanged e-mails between each other with the aid of their Mioplants, "talking" about everything they read. They were both astounded at the amount of information, hints and clues that the two agents had managed to dig up.

> "Interesting." said Niklas as he put down his share of the files after a while. "So either if our man or woman is a mutant or not, we're dealing with someone or several someone's who have been doing this for centuries unless it's some sort of cult or organization of decapitators that has been around since before Christ? Normally I would say that this rules out mutants, but there are some really old ones. En Sabah Nur AKA Apocalypse for instance, he's milleniums old. There are some other mutants almost as old as him, there is evidence of mutant activity a few hundred years after Christ as well. But speculation in this is fruitless until we find out the one or the ones responsible. Why are you staring at me like that?" asked Niklas and looked over at Fox Mulder. He blinked in suprise.
 "Well... Normally when I show my research or in some cases, even evidence, I'm usually met with amusement, disbelief or a combination of the two. You guys didn't even blink."

> "When you've stood eye to eye with guys like Magneto, it's very hard to become suprised by anything a bunch of papers have to say." replied Erik and smiled apologetically. "But this is really an astounding amount of information you guys have managed to dig up, some day I have to go down into the basement and see just what you guys are hiding in there." A relationship perhaps./ Niklas thought to himself as he watched how close the two agents stood and how they behaved, looking at each other, exchanging silent messages with their eyes as if they had some kind of telepathic ability. He didn't feel any indication of superpowers from anyone of them however, they were normal human beings. He looked once again at the tie Fox Mulder was wearing. /Well, more or less normal anyway.../ he added to himself.

> "Well, we've been waiting for you two. You weren't here when we arrived so we checked out the crime scene and then returned to wait a while longer."
 "Well, there was another decapitation a few hours ago. We decided to go play investigators." replied Erik with a slight grin.

> "Oh yeah, that reminds me!" exclaimed Niklas and slowly brought out a sword from the folded trenchcoat he was carrying, holding it with one of the arms of the trenchcoat separating it from his hands. He put it down on the table the two real agents had been sitting at and studied it closely.
 "Heavy saber, French, maybe Spanish. Early 16th century or late 15th." commented Erik calmly as they all stared at the blood coating the sword.

> "Where did you get this?" asked Agent Scully, her voice somewhere between curiosity and accusation. Niklas looked at the sword in silence for a few seconds.
 "I nabbed it from the latest murder.

It could be the murder weapon, but I'm inclined to believe that we're looking at the weapon of the loser in this duel. I didn't want it getting caught up with the police, especially not if it meant a struggle between the FBI and the NYPD over who would do the honors of examining it. We'll get someone to look at it and then we'll hand it over." said Niklas and walked over to the entrance where he placed his trenchcoat on a hanger, making sure that neither his Katana nor his shotgun was visible.

> "You stole evidence from a murder scene!" exclaimed Agent Scully, stating the obvious.
 "I didn't steal, I merely... borrowed it for a while." he replied and chuckled to himself. "Aw *come* on, you are the prime gossip of the FBI, your unconventional cases and reports are legendary. Don't tell me that you accomplished all that without ever bending the rules a little?"

> "Not to this extent." mumbled Agent Mulder but he didn't seem all that sincere about it. Niklas winked at him and smiled. "Not to this extent" my ass!/
An e-mail from Erik arrived and he opened it, another body had been found, died of a sharp object going through his throat. According to three witnesses, the dead man had pulled out a submachinegun and tried to kill an unknown man in a trenchcoat with it. The unknown man had taken several hits and went down, when the soon about to be dead man walked up to the downed man, he suddenly rose and shoved a sword into the throat of the man with the smg. The wounded man had staggered away, thrown himself in the East river and simply vanished. The police assumed that he was dead, unaware of the fact that if it had been Duncan MacLeod, he wouldn't need to come up for air.

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>
 Duncan grabbed the anchor line of the small boat and slowly climbed aboard. He slowly checked it out and sighed in relief as he found it unoccupied. A quick search revealed some canned food that Duncan heated on the simple stove after leaving a few dollar bills in their place. He soon found himself sitting on the edge of a bed, sipping on a cup of hot soup as he forced his body to relax. It felt darn good to finally be able to actually sit down and rest, he had been hunted like an animal ever since the first meeting with Talbot, he had seen him twice more since then. Not getting close enough to fight, because Talbot hadn't come without company any of the times. There hadn't been any more Immortals for a while now though, only mortal humans. He didn't like killing them, especially since most of them didn't seem to have any idea of what they were up against. /Probably hired killers./ he thought to himself. It didn't make him feel any better though, they were most likely the scum of the earth, but their corruption didn't make him feel any better. He had seen the Immortal who hid his Quickening once again but the other hadn't noticed him. Perhaps he wasn't able to sense another's Quickening when he hid his own? Duncan didn't know, whatever the reason, he had been able to slip away before being noticed. The other Immortal had changed into a somber suit with a trenchcoat over it. The favored way of hiding a sword for all male Immortals and quite many of the women as well. Duncan put those thoughts out of his mind though, he decided to sleep for a while. He hadn't slept since Saturday, whenever he had hired a room somewhere or tried to doze off in a dark alley somewhere he had felt the presence of another Immortal closing in. He hoped that this might throw Talbot and his toadies off his back for a while, he really needed some rest right now. If an Immortal came along, the Quickening would warn him. If a mortal came along, Duncan hoped that he would wake up or that the mortal wouldn't take his head off. But he was only distantly aware of the fact that he might die in his sleep, he really needed it now. He wasn't aware of the fact that

his hands put down the empty cup of soap on a small nightstand until he leaned back and rested his head on a heavenly soft pillow.

>
 Talbot stared out over the harbor, MacLeod was out there according to the tracker. He briefly considered going after him, but he guessed that he could allow his old enemy an hour or two of rest before the hunt would start anew. Of course, there was also the possibility that some of his hired helpers managed to track him down. None of them was aware of the fact that Duncan was an Immortal though, there were only hired to inflict more pain, take his stress to all new levels as he was hunted through New York. It could wait, Talbot had waited for this moment for several years now, he could wait a few hours longer. He pulled his trenchcoat tighter around his body and stepped away from the pier, a sinister smirk on his lips as he made his way over towards his car.

>
 Connor MacLeod stepped out of the cab and his features twisted as he once again inhaled the stench that was New York. He held out a few bills to the cabby and mumbled something incoherent as the cabby thanked him for the generous tip. Connor tensed as he felt another Immortal nearby but relaxed slightly as he saw who it was. He was still fully prepared to whip out his sword and do whatever was necessary though. He never really understood why Duncan was able to treat this man with such ease.

> "Hello Connor." said the other man silently. "I still haven't found him." he said before Connor was able to even ask the question.
 "Hello Methos." replied Connor and saw the other man cringe slightly at the mention of a name that only a few Immortals believed in and even fewer knew belonged to this man, the oldest known Immortal.

>

> Part 3, Where Immortals gather...

>
 "Yes Charles. ... No, I don't know when I will be back. ... Personal business. ... I can't reveal that. ... Yes, I will explain everything when I return. ... It will be a good one, promise. ... Yeah, bye." Mulder carefully closed the door to his bedroom and considered the strange phonecall Jim had made. It didn't make any sense. /Personal business? He's got a case, hasn't he?/ Mulder shrugged, perhaps it was simply some girlfriend he hadn't told what he did for a living. But Charles didn't sound like a woman, he could be gay of course, it wasn't that uncommon these days. But for some reason, Mulder didn't quite believe that he was. He listened at the door separating his room from Scully's, he heard her moving around in there so he knew that she was awake. They had all been up late last night, another corpse had been found. This guy wasn't decapitated though, he had been stabbed in his throat after a failed murder attempt. There hadn't been any of the mysterious phenomenon's, but they had all left to check it out anyway. Agent Tom had sent the sword away to be examined, but the results wasn't back yet. They had no leads, no suspects and the corpses had no relation to each other what so ever. It seemed as if the guy killing them just picked people at random even if Mulder had to admit that it looked as if he was just defending himself. But even if it had been self defense, he still had to brought in for questioning. Mulder knocked at the door that separated his and Scully's rooms.

> "Hey Scully, are you decent?" he asked quizzically, entertaining a brief hope that she would reply "No, but please come in anyway.", as usual, no luck in that department.
 "Yes. It's open." Mulder shrugged, it always was. It was a tradition they had agreed on in the beginning after one to many stays at crappy motels in the middle of nowhere. Whenever possible, they got rooms next to each other with a door separating them. The door was usually closed but never locked, neither of them walked in to the other without first checking if the

coast was clear. It allowed for easy access to the other and still gave both of them the privacy they both needed. He stepped inside and found her sitting on her bed, wearing a large white T-shirt and a pair of sweatpants. She was bent over her own legs in concentration as she clipped her toenails. He smiled and lept onto her bed, bouncing slightly as he crossed his legs and studied her intently. "What?" she asked absently as she finished her right foot and moved on to her left. He intercepted her, grabbed the sissor and placed her left foot in his lap. She smiled and rolled her eyes at him but didn't say anything as he finished what she had started. She leaned back and relaxed, leaning on her elbows and studied him intently with a slight sparkle in her eyes. It wasn't the first time he did this, the first time she had been shocked and looked at him with bewilderment after he had offered to do it for her. After the first couple of times, she had simply accepted it, grateful to have someone else do it for her. He snipped off the last offending piece of excessive nail from her pinky toe and then moved up her right foot in his lap as well. He silently gave her a foot massage. She made a content noise and leaned back, rested her hands on her stomach.
> "Enjoying yourself mam?" he asked cheerfully.
 "Oh... yeah!" she replied and rolled her eyes.

> "Perhaps a full body massage would be in order mam?" he asked and winked at her. She closed her eyes and giggled.
 "Promises, promises." she sighed. /Wow, I wouldn't mind giving her a full body massage. I wonder if she was serious?/ he thought to himself. There was a knock at the door and it opened a few centimeters.
> "He's been located." said Jim simply. "We're leaving in five if you want to tag along."

> Scully jumped on one leg as she tried to get the last shoe into place, the others were sitting in the car with impatient looks on their faces. Mulder had offered to go alone but she had refused, he had been running off alone far to many times for her to let him out of her sight when she didn't have to. Sure, he would have been in the company of two other agents, but she preferred when she herself could keep an eye on him. She had spent many hours being worried over him and she had tried to imagine her life without him. She couldn't, a life without Mulder at her side wasn't a life as far as she was concerned. She sometimes wondered exactly when he had managed to get under her skin to this extent. She had liked him from the start, or well, she had been attracted to him from the start. His fame, his looks and his way of being had made her fall for him, but it was only a minor crush. She had expected it to fade away into nothing, sometimes it had, but it always returned with more and more power until she one day realized that he had become such an integral part of her life that she couldn't imagine keeping on living without him by her side. Whenever he did something as sweet as this morning when he had started clipping her toenails, she always felt her emotions towards him rise to even higher levels. If they hadn't been interrupted, she wasn't sure what might have happened between the two of them. She darted inside and yelped as Tom floored it before the door had closed. She strapped herself in and finally managed to get the shoe on right.
 "So, where is he and how was he located?" asked Mulder curiously as Tom placed a siren on the roof and speeded through town at a breakneck speed.

> "Pure blind luck! An hour ago, a family intended to go on a little trip with their sailing boat. The father noticed that someone had been on it and sneaked onboard, he looked in through a window and saw a man sleeping on one of the beds, cradling a sword in his arms. He called the police and they notified us. They have the pier surrounded and there are a few police boats in the area, surrounding the boat

from all directions. I've gotten them to wait though, they won't do anything until we show up, unless sleeping beauty does something rash of course."
 "Did he..." started Scully but never got to finish her question before Tom answered it.

> "Match the description? Yep, the father looked at the scetch the police had and gave a positive ID, it's our man or at least someone who looks a hell of a lot like him."

> Palmira Sanchez turned around at the noise, just like everyone else. The screeching of tires and frantic honking of a carhorn certainly got the attention of everyone in the area. She swore and reached for her gun as a black Cadillac suddenly spun around a corner, barely avoiding a policecar parked right in it's path. It stopped a few inches away from another car and four people leaped out of the car, two of them looking slightly nauseous. It was the sibling Agents and two others that Mira didn't recognize. All four of them jogged until they were standing in front of the command center. All four of them pulled out FBI identification and badges, a frantic conversation was held and something was apparently decided upon.
 "Yo Mira!" exclaimed one of the agents, the one without the sunglasses. She searched her memory for a while until his name resurfaced.

> "Yeah Tom, what is it?" she asked and walked closer. She hadn't been invited to the command center, it was headed by some thickheaded captain, a colonel from the National guard and a representative from the Mayors office.
 "Jim and I are leading the strikeforce, do you and Francis want to be the NYPD representatives?" he asked and Mira nodded fiercely. She couldn't conceal a gasp as she saw his eyes, he now had one brown and one blue eye. /That green eye could also have been a lens, or it might have been his real eyecolor. Damn this guy!/
she thought to herself. "Great, grab yourselves some Kevlar and get down to the pier." he said and pulled out a shotgun from underneath his trenchcoat. Mira raised an eyebrow at that and the two other suits he had arrived with also looked a little suprised. The other agent, Jim, earned a few more raised eyebrows as he also pulled out one and leaned against his right shoulder.

>
 "Mulder." said Scully hesitantly. "How in gods name did they manage to conceal those things in the car?" she asked and pointed at the shotguns.

> "Beats me." he replied and accepted a pair of Kevlar vests that a guy from a SWAT team handed him. He gave the smaller one to Scully, pulled out his gun and walked down to the pier where Tom and Jim were waiting. Tom had taken command, dismissing the police, National guard and the Mayors representative without hesitation. He just ordered them to stay out of his way and take the guy out if he tried to escape. They were soon joined by the policewoman Tom had shouted at and with her came her partner.
 "Palmira Sanchez and Francis Gatti, meet Fox Mulder and Dana Scully. Mira and Francis are NYPD, Mulder and Scully are with the FBI. We'll also be joined by Schwartz and Greene, SWATs. But they will be in the water, prepared to take the guy if he tries to dive into the water." Jim introduced and explained before looking around. "Well, no use staying here until retirement. Let's go." he said and smiled in anticipation. Mulder slapped the Kevlar vest a couple of times, it's weight was uncomfortable but it was reassuring to know that he had at least some protection. From the previous encounters, it didn't seem like the guy had any firearms. But they were going to be close enough for him to use his sword, Mulder didn't really like the idea of Scully being that close to a madman with a sword. But she could take care of herself and wouldn't appreciate if he tried to convince her to stay out of this.

> "Hey?! What is that diver doing on the pier? Schwartz, Greene, where are you?" barked Tom into his radio.
 "Schwartz here. Under the boat as instructed."

> "Greene here. Covering the boat from a little way off."
 "Then who the hell is on the pier?" asked Jim and pulled out a pair of binoculars to get a better look at him. "Loubar!" he hissed and held on to the shotgun with his left hand as he pulled out a large pistol that Mulder didn't recognize. "Get moving! That is Victor Loubar, international terrorist!" he barked and started to run. Tom was running half a second later, but had overtaken Jim within a second. Mulder followed close behind but noticed that the distance between him and the two twins was increasing by the second. The diver noticed them, threw something onto the boat and threw himself into the water. As Jim and Tom reached the end of the pier, the boat exploded and the shockwave threw them into the water. Mulder stopped and covered his face as the heat and shrapnel came sizzling through the air. He looked behind and saw that guy Francis just a few meters behind himself, the women a few meters behind Francis. He nodded, they were safe. He started to run again, the two agents had resurfaced and was swimming for the pier so he directed his attention towards the burning ship. He stopped and looked at the inferno, the boat was a single burning flame. He had to back away, the heat was unbearable.

> "Mutant or not, Loubars hide is *mine*." snarled Tom as he hauled himself up onto the pier and bent down to give his brother a helping hand. Mulder noticed the ease with which he pulled his brother up with only one hand.
 "Are you guys all right?" asked Mulder with concern as Francis and the ladies arrived. Scully was fussing over them at once, checking for injuries.

> "Yeah, dripping wet but that is just about it." replied Jim and sighed.
 "Something grazed my left hand, but it's just a scratch. My cat has done worse to me on several occasions." said Tom and looked at the palm of his left hand. Mulder saw a wound, perhaps four centimeters long. It didn't bleed, the cold water must have taken care of that. "Did you see anyone leaving the ship?" asked Tom and looked at him. Mulder felt a little discomfort at those strange eyes, one eye was brown and the other was blue. It was very unsettling to look at.

> "From that inferno?" he asked and raised his eyebrows.
 "Some mutants are very resistant to fire." replied Jim and shrugged.

> "Screw that." said Mira suddenly. "You saw Victor Loubar? The terrorist and assassin?" Jim nodded.
 "Yeah it was him all right, I recognized his face at once. He hadn't pulled on the goggles or his face mask yet and it was him in all his glory." he replied and spat into the water.

> "How did you recognize him, his face is supposed to be unknown?" asked Francis.
 "We had a little scuffle with him a while ago, we saw him before he set off a bomb and escaped." replied Tom swiftly.

> "A while ago, I thought the two of you just recently teamed up together since your partners were both unavailable?" asked Scully and Mulder nodded, he had also thought to ask about that.
 "It was a joint operation, three pairs were sent to catch him." replied Jim calmly.

> "Three teams, from Mutant Affairs?" asked Mulder in disbelief.
 "Are you guys with Mutant Affairs?" asked Mira curiously. "Do you think Loubar is a mutant?"

> "He was suspected of it at first, his mastery of disguises could have been the result of some sort of shapeshifting ability. But after raiding his hideout, we discovered a large amount of makeup and

sophisticated equipment. He was handed over to other departments until his status as a mutant could be either confirmed or denied." replied Jim and pulled up his radio. "Tell the buggers in the boats to make themselves useful, I want them to check every fucking inch of water out there with their sonar. If they find someone swimming down there, I want him flushed out. Over."
 +How do you expect us to do that? Over.+ asked a respectful voice in the other end and Mulder identified it as the representative from the Mayors office. > "I don't know! Call the navy, drop some bombs in the bay, tell everyone to start drinking this stinking water until we can see him or electrocute the whole god damn river, I don't care. Just flush him out! Over and out." snapped Jim and threw the radio into the East river.

> Duncan groaned underwater, his flesh still felt like it was on fire. So much for rest!/ He didn't even know what had happened. One minute, he had been asleep, the next he had woken up in extreme pain right in the middle of a burning inferno. He sank downwards with the wreck and just drifted where he was, held down by the roof over him. He waited for about ten minutes or so, until the worst of his pains had faded away. He slowly made his way closer to shore by simply walking on the bottom of the river. It was hard to tell where he was going exactly, the line of sight was hardly more than a meter. There was a lot of crap floating around down here. But he was walking upwards, that much he knew. A few quick steps brought him closer to shore and suddenly his head was above the water. He stopped and just looked, he hadn't seen this many officers of the law and their cars for quite some time. He shrugged and walked up the rest of the way. He was wet all through, he was hungry and he wanted the head of whoever it had been who had set him on fire! But the first thing he needed to take care of was his wet clothes, he needed dry clothes and preferably something warm to eat as well.

>
 Victor Loubar hissed as he removed the scubagear, his left arm hurt like hell. He had been forced to dive into the water and disregard his wounded shoulder, it had been all right on the way over, it had been all right during the two hours he had spent in hiding just to make sure it wasn't a trap. When the police arrived, well, he had to set his plans into motion anyway and hope for the best. He dug into a pocket on his right arm and got a hold of a small canister. He removed a couple of white pills and swallowed two of them. He blinked and sighed as the wondrous pill did it's magic. Dyzeril was highly experimental, but it sure as hell removed pain like nothing else he had ever tried. No side-effects, not known ones anyway and it was swift. He was already hooked on them, he would have to buy himself a small stock for emergencies like this. It had only been ten days since that bloody bitch had shot him as he was escaping in the water. He had planned for anything and a small container of oxygen had been taped to his left leg. He had been able to make his escape underwater without coming up to the surface, he had left the city at once but he had been yearning for his revenge so he had returned only a few days after the incident, planning on how to end Rollie Tylers life as painfully as possible. Then that bloody warehouse exploded and the cannonfodder he had planned to use ended up in the hospital and later arrested by the police. He was desperate for hard money, money that wasn't already tied up in his old accounts, accounts that Tyler and his friends might be able to find by now. He wasn't quite sure how much they had been able to get from his computer before it blew up, but even the suspicion that they had his accounts had made him afraid of using them. So when he was offered this job, he just had to accept it. He reached for the tracking device and planned to get rid of it when he saw movement! He

looked at it again and saw how his target was in movement, on dry land according to the map.

> "How did the motherf**ker survive the explosion? The fire?" roared Loubar until he noticed that people were staring at him. He jumped into his car and drove away at a breakneck speed, he couldn't afford to remain in the area with all the cops nearby. He would have to pull back and try again, sooner or later he would get another chance. He just hoped that he would get it before he ran out of money.

> Niklas brought out a bottle of Whiskey as they gathered back at the operation central, he placed six glasses on the table and poured everyone a generous splash of Whiskey. Francis and Mira had been invited as well, it was Erik's idea and even if Niklas didn't like being around more law enforcement then strictly necessary, he wasn't about to protest when Erik made a suggestion. Niklas was fully aware of the fact that Erik quite possibly was one of the fastest minds on earth. If he invited them, he would have at least one reason for it. He took a chair around the large table and leaned back with a sigh.
 "So, what do we think? Is Loubar the mysterious decapitator or what?" he said and looked at the others.

> "He was out there on the pier, no corpse was found in the boat, no body showed up on the sonar search. It could have gotten away of course, but Loubar was there. The entire area was sealed, the chances of him making it into the perimeter are very small even if I have to admit that he did manage to get out of it without being detected." said Erik and gulped down the whiskey in one swift swig. "He is a master of disguises." Erik shook his head and poured himself another glass. "Your thoughts?" he asked and looked around the table.
 "I don't think it's him." said Agent Mulder slowly. "He hasn't been around long enough."

> "As much as I'd hate to admit it, I have to go with Agent Mulder on this one." replied Agent Scully. "Victor Loubar masquerading and chopping peoples heads off with a sword? It just doesn't seem right."
 "Loubar was there, he has shown some slight tendencies of insanity in the past. Just because we can't see a reason it doesn't mean that he doesn't have one." said Mira slowly. "I think he might be our man."

> "Slight?" asked Francis and made a face. "I'm with Palmira on this one, I think it's Loubar."
 "I think Loubar is our man." said Niklas slowly.

> "I don't." said Erik finally. "3-3. How about this, we look for both Loubar and the mysterious decapitator?"
 "I'll drink to that!" said Mira and drained the remains of her Whiskey.

> "Amen!" replied Francis and followed her example.
 "Do you have some sort of grudge against Loubar?" asked Niklas and looked at the two NYPD representatives curiously.

> "Yeah, he's been harassing two of our friends a couple of times. We've got them under police surveillance now, I think we'd better move them to a safehouse though now when we've got confirmation that he's in town." replied Francis.
 "Loubar is bound to know every bloody place in town though." said Mira with disgust. "We'll probably have to move them somewhere else for a while."

> "Why? We've got four extra bedrooms here. Move them in here instead and put two boys in blue in the last two bedrooms. Nobody knows that we're using this place, not even our superiors. They won't know until we leave them the bill when all this is over." said Erik absently. He pulled out his wallet and slid four extra keycards over towards Mira and Francis.
 "Are you sure?" asked Mira. "It won't cause any trouble?"

> "Hell no, we've paid for the rooms, we might as well put them to use." said Erik. Niklas frowned, it was something that he knew he

ought to remember, but he couldn't remember what. He shrugged and hoped it wasn't anything important.
 "They'll probably want to bring a cat, is that all right?" asked Francis.

> "Not at all, I love cats." said Niklas and smiled. If they had a cat, it had to be nice people.

> ***

> "We're what?" asked Rollie in disbelief.
 "Getting the hell out of here for the moment, Loubar really is in town." replied Mira.

> "We feared that we might have to move you guys out of town for a while, but we got a offer from a couple of feds we're working with at the moment so now you'll be staying at the penthouse of a fancy hotel with four FBI agents." said Francis and fell silent. "We don't want to risk any leaks, so there won't be any added protection. We rely on secrecy this time, nobody, not even Van Duran knows at what hotel you'll be staying. The four FBI agents and us are the only ones who will know exactly where you'll be."
 "Can I bring Chiops?" asked Angie worriedly and looked at her cat, sleeping on top of a dummy bear while Bluie was on the prowl. She was certain now, Bluie really was harassing her cat. "Butt out Bluie!" she snapped and the little robot walked away, sulking. She would have to take a look at his software one of these days, his behavior had been nothing short of odd lately.

> "Yes. I asked and they said it was okay." replied Francis.

"When do we leave?" asked Angie.

> "How soon can you get packed?" asked Mira seriously.

> ***

> Emma Frost raised an eyebrow as she saw Niklas on the other side of the street. It wasn't any doubt about it even if he had changed into a splendid dark blue suit and wore a black trenchcoat over that. His sunglasses were of a different model then he usually wore, his hair was combed even if he hadn't bothered to shave. He was in the company of three other suits, one of them looked so much like Niklas himself that she closed her eyes for a few seconds and then looked again just to make sure that she wasn't seeing things that wasn't there. The spitting image differed in some ways though, he didn't wear any sunglasses and his hair was slightly longer and he had bothered to shave. Then there was a tall lanky man, dark hair, clean shaved and sunglasses walking close to a petite red-haired woman who was quite lovely. Emma frowned, if she didn't know Niklas, she would have been prepared to swear that they all were government agents. The one who looked so much like Niklas must be Erik Jonsson, his cousin. The other two might be bodyguards of some sort but the woman didn't look like someone who would take up guarding people for a living. The man didn't have that look either. Emma memorized the name of the hotel they had came out of and decided to do a little snooping. She had heard that Niklas had left the mansion to take care of some "personal affairs" as he had called it, she didn't trust him, not for a second. If he was up to something, she wanted to know what it was. But at the moment she just wanted a moment to herself, away from the stress of it all. The meeting at Frost enterprises was over, she had the whole afternoon to herself and she'd be damned if she would spend that tailing after someone as unimportant as Niklas Jonsson. Not when she could send her driver to do it for her.

> ***

> "'Another decapitation with following fireworks, out to investigate. Make yourselves comfortable. There's food for the cat in the kitchen. Batman, Robin, Little red riding hood and Casper the friendly ghost.'" read Mira from the note that had been left on the table.
 "I'll bet you ten to one that Jim wrote that one." commented Francis with a slight smile. "We'd better stay here to make

the introductions when they arrive." he continued.

> "You stay, I want to check out this latest murder." said Mira and dropped the note on the table.
 "Be careful." said Francis worriedly as he weighed his duties as a partner against protecting Rollie and Angie until the feds arrived.

> "I can take care of myself Francis, it's just a crime scene investigation, not a raid against a drug cartel." she snorted fondly and patted his cheek. "Take care of them." she said and walked out to the car where she soon found out about the murder on the police radio. It must had come up when she and Francis had been at the loft, waiting for Angie and Rollie to pack.

> Rollie looked at the bed and sighed in extreme contentment. Since Loubar had made his escape, he had only slept one full night. The first night when he and Angie had fallen asleep on the couch in the old brewery. He hadn't been able to use his bed since he couldn't even be in the same room as it without thinking about what Angie and Loubar had been doing in it. He hadn't touched it since he found out, it had been left exactly as it had been when they... He closed his eyes. He had managed to snatch a few hours of sleep here and there, in chairs and in his couch. But he had been plagued by horrible nightmares, so he had resigned himself to searching for Loubar or building a new room for Angie. He had just finished it when Mira and Francis arrived to take them away from the loft. As he looked at this bed, he realized just how bad he had missed a good nights sleep during the latest two weeks. At the moment, he felt so exhausted that he was fully willing to let his friends and the feds do all the searching for Loubar while he just rested here. He unclenched his hands and slowly willed Loubar out of his thoughts, if he kept thinking about him, he'd never be able to go to sleep.

> Niklas looked down at the notepad in disgust, he had taken statements from seven witnesses and drawn scetches after their descriptions. He looked at all seven, he hadn't allowed any of them to see the pictures he had previously drawn so they wouldn't be able to copy someone else's descriptions. All seven pictures were relatively alike, either everyone lied through their teeth or they had another Immortal on their hands. He walked over to Erik and handed him the notepad, Erik looked at the pictures and nodded slowly.
 "This guy has been spotted with Duncan a few times. I didn't know that he was an Immortal though." said Erik slowly. "He must be here for a reason, probably to help Duncan. Of course, he could be here to kill Duncan as well, with Immortals it's hard to tell. MacLeod has taken quite a few heads lately, he might just be the most powerful Immortal around. A weaker Immortal might ignore their friendship just to get Duncans power."

> "Ruthless bastards, aren't they?" said Niklas slowly.
 "Not any worse then some humans, some of them are better then most humans. Duncan is one of them. I wished you had been able to subdue him, I don't think I want the ones chasing him cutting his head off." he shrugged and looked around. "Where are Agents Mulder and Scully?" he asked curiously. "I didn't see them leave."

> "Me neither." replied Niklas and looked himself without finding them.

> "Rick? Rick Frodin?" asked Mulder into his cell phone.
 +Spooky? Is that you? God, I haven't heard from you since graduation!+

> "The good 'ol days huh?"
 +Yeah. So, I assume that you're not calling me after all these years just to say hello, what can I do for you?+

> "Ricky, always straight to the core of matters." said Mulder and smiled a little. He really regretted loosing touch with Rick after they both became Special Agents. He was one of the few people who

Mulder actually could tolerate and one of the even fewer who could call him 'Spooky' to his face without hurting any feelings.
 +Did you expect me to change Mulder?+

> "Not really." said Mulder and grinned. "Actually, I called to ask you a couple of questions about two of your coworkers up at Mutant Affairs."
 +Gossip! Oh Mulder, you remembered! Who are they and what do you want to know?+

> "Jim and Tom Olsen, anything you can think of really."
 +Jim and Tom Olsen? I am pretty sure that I've never heard of them Mulder. Are you sure that they're Mutant Affairs?+

> "That's what they said." said Mulder and felt a cold feeling spread through his body.
 +I should have heard something...+ murmured Rick in the other end. +Wait and I'll look through the personnel records here, but if I don't remember them, there's not any gossip going around or else...+ he fell silent for a few seconds. +We do have a Robert Olsen, but no Tom or Jim Olsen. They're lying.+

> "Can you do me another favor, run a search of the entire FBI and see if there's two brothers named Jim and Tom Olsen in any department."
 +Sure, hold on.+ Mulder tapped his foot impatiently and waited for almost a minute. +No Tom or Jim Olsen who are related to each other in any way. Not even cross departmentwise. I even checked the Shadow departments.+

> "Impostors then." sighed Mulder. "I suspected that."
 +Your instincts again Spooky, trust 'em everytime.+

> "Always have, always will Rick." Mulder considered things. "When I get back, would you like to go and have a couple of beers, catch up on old times?"
 +Muu-ldeer! Have you finally seen the light?+

> "Gone gay you mean? No, there's no chance of that happening anytime soon." He chuckled, Rick never changed. He looked over at Scully through the corner of his eye and saw her smiling. No chance, not with her around to keep me straight./ he thought. "Thanks again Rick, I'll call you."

> +The cute ones always say that, but they never do. Bye Spooky.+
 "See ya Rick." Mulder chuckled as he tucked his phone away.

> "Well?" asked Scully who hadn't heard the entire conversation.
 "Jim and Tom aren't who they seem to be, they certainly don't work for Mutant Affairs and there are no brothers in the entire FBI with those names. They are lying through their teeth."

> "I knew it! I knew no government agency would fork out the money for the accommodations we have here. They don't exactly seem like the real thing either, they're to weird, even for Mutant Affairs."

> Niklas had all seven pictures laid out in front of him and pretended to use them to draw a final scetch. In reality, he was looking at a surveillance picture with the aid of his Mioplant, the computer connected directly to his brain. He looked down at the picture he had drawn, removed the carbon paper and handed the copy to a Inspector from the New York police just as Mira arrived.
 "Here officer, flush him out and call this number as soon as he's spotted. Don't approach him on your own, call us and keep him under surveillance until we arrive."

> "He's a murderer, what right do you have to give us orders?"
 "Have you or have you not been ordered to give us any and all assistance we require?" asked Niklas and raised an eyebrow.

> "... Yeah." replied the Inspector reluctantly.
 "Clear it with your boss if you wish, but nobody does anything until either me or my brother arrives. I don't care if the President himself shows up and orders the officers on the scene around, nobody does anything except surveillance until me or Tom agrees to it."

> "Who is this guy?" asked the Inspector and frowned, Niklas could

feel the resentment shooting out of the Inspector, he *really* didn't like being ordered around.
 "That's what we're here to find out." said Niklas and frowned. "Excuse me a moment." he said and walked over towards Erik who was staring silently as a pair of black vans arrived and a group of men in dark suits jumped out. When Mulder and Scully turned around a corner and the suits spotted them, they all frowned and approached the two agents with disapproving looks. Niklas and Erik moved into the shadows where they slowly approached the two now surrounded FBI agents.

>
 "Agents Mulder and Scully." said the apparent leader of the group. "Why am I not suprised to see you two here?"

> "Do we know you?" asked Mulder slowly. Dana thought she recognized one or two of the men surrounding them, she had seen them at other times. They're with *them*! / she thought in panic and her hands itched to hold her gun pointed at them.

>
 "Mira!" hissed Niklas as the policewoman moved over to stand at his side. "Butt out!" he whispered as loud as he dared. "But do it quietly!"

> "Why?" she whispered back.
 "Just do it."

> "Dream on, I wouldn't want to miss this for the world." she said and pulled out her gun. Niklas sighed and slowly slid his trenchcoat aside so he could pull out the Winchester Defender shotgun he was carrying hidden in there.
 "As you wish. Wait for me or Tom to make a move, when or if we do... Just follow our lead."

> "Who are the suits?" whispered Mira curiously.
 "Hush-hush government department most likely, a blend between mobsters and CIA operatives. We're talking guys who perform illegal research on innocent civilians, kidnap and murder people who knows to much and do things that criminals wouldn't even consider."

> "Our government?!"
 "Hush, every government has at least one department like that. Now silent, I'm trying to hear what they're saying!" he whispered in reply.

> "How can you, they're ten meters from here and talking silently!"
 "*Schh*!" said Niklas as another man made an appearance.

>
 "Agents. I really hoped you would have given up by now. You are poking your noses into things you cannot possibly hope to understand." said a cold, humorless voice and Mulder stiffened as the stub of a cigarette was thrown in front of his feet. He slowly turned around just to see a familiar face just as he put a fresh cigarette between his lips and lighted it.

> "You." said Mulder slowly and clenched his fists. The man nodded graciously.
 "Me." he replied. "You two really should have learned to leave things best unmeddled with alone, I'm afraid that your involvement in this in a unknown factor we cannot possibly allow at this time. You will have to come with us, you will not be harmed... permanently. You will be released when you won't pose a threat to our interests any longer." Mulders hands itched to reach for his gun, but he kept them clenched into fists. Prepared to knock the living daylights out of the first one to lay a hand on Scully. He glanced over at her, trying to tell her to run as soon as she got the chance and don't look back. He looked into her eyes and knew that she wouldn't, her eyes conveyed that "Yeah right, keep on dreaming Mulder." look he had seen before. She wouldn't leave him, not now, not ever. It was comforting, but he didn't want her to be held prisoner by these men, he wouldn't allow it. He suddenly realized that the smoking man had asked a question.

> "What?" he asked and turned his attention over towards the Cancerman.
 "I asked if you would come along peacefully or if you wanted to do this the hard way?"

> "The police..." started Mulder but fell silent as he noticed that another team of suited men had just finished moving everybody else out of the alley and were approaching. None of them had pulled out any weapons, yet. But they were outnumbered, he saw twelve men in addition to the Cancer man. They wouldn't be able to make it, not with six to one odds.
 "Won't be able to help you, even your two mysterious friends vanished." said the smoking man and smiled a humorless smile. "You are alone, outnumbered and chanceless. This is your last chance, come peacefully or unconscious?"

> +cli-click+
 "I think they'd prefer to walk out of here on their own!" yelled a voice and Mulder blinked in surprise as Tom jumped out of the shadows with a shotgun in his hands.

> "One move and the coroner will have to spend a few hours pulling lead out of your sorry asses!" said another voice from behind Mulder. Jim! "Mulder, Scully. Go, we'll meet you back at the place. Mira, you go with them."

> "No fucking way."
 +cli-click+

> "Way?" asked Jim.
 "Way." replied Mira nervously and joined him and Scully as they slowly walked out of the circle of frustrated men in suits.

> "Ah-ah-ah." said Tom. "Smoking will kill you, but if you move you'll see that a shotgun round will kill you even faster than smoking." The Cancer man stiffened and stopped slowly shuffling backwards. "What are you three still doing here? Move!" snapped Tom and cast a swift look over his shoulder. "Run!" he screamed and for a brief instant, Mulder saw his eyes glowing red at the edges. He turned around and ran with the women at his side, running just as fast as he did.

> "Ten minutes. That should do it." said Erik after a while and looked over at Niklas.
 "Probably. Keep your nooses pointed at the wall, don't move or the police will have to scrape you guys off the wall!" snapped Niklas and slowly backed out of the alley with Erik by his side. When they were almost out and the light became better, they tucked away their shotguns, turned around and ran. They leaped into a HawkTech Cruiser that Erik had called over, Niklas jumped into the back seat while Erik leapt into the front seats. The car took off after a swift transmission from Eriks Mioplant and then they were safe. For the moment...

>
 "I want them!" snapped the smoking man and looked around the alley for any signs of his wallet, cigarettes, lighter or gun. "I *want* them *dead*!" The men were searching the alley inch by inch and they finally found their wallets, weapons and belongings in a garbage can, covered with filthy yucky stuff that smelled *very* bad. The Cancerman looked at his soggy cigarettes and snarled. "I want them tortured, then killed!"

>

> Part 4, The truth...

>
 "Who's there?!" asked a firm voice from the other side of the door.

> "Relax Francis, it's only us." said Mira and opened the door with her keycard. She stepped inside with the two FBI agents and closed the door behind everyone. Francis looked carefully at all three of them, all covered with sweat, the FBI agents looked confused and troubled, Mira looked worried.
 "What happened?" he asked as he looked them all over for signs of injuries.

> "I'd like to know that too!" snapped Mira and looked at the two FBI agents. "Who were those guys in the suits and the geezer with the smokes?!" Mulder and Scully looked at each other, volumes passing between the two of them from a single glance. Mulder sighed and sat down at the table.
 "During the course of our investigations,

we've crossed paths with the smoking man a couple of times. We believe that he works for a Consortium somehow connected to our government, how they're connected and how much the government really knows about what they do is something we haven't found out yet. What they do however is covering up the truth, kidnap and sometimes even murder all innocents who gets in their way. I also firmly believe that they're covering up the existence of Alien activities on earth."

> "You mean like, Skrulls and Kree?" asked Francis.
 "Other aliens but I suppose Skrulls and Kree might also be involved, we've just never come across any of them." replied Agent Mulder.

> "What makes you think that the government is involved?" asked Mira.
 "I can't reveal that." replied Mulder. "Would you care to reveal who 'Tom' and 'Jim' really are?" he asked and looked up at Mira and Francis.

> "They're with the FBI." replied Francis and wondered what brought this about.
 "No they're not." replied Agent Scully. "We checked them out, they're not on the FBI payroll."

> "Aren't you working with them?" asked Francis.
 "No, we've never met them before we arrived here in New York." she replied.

> "What's all the noise about?" asked Angie as she walked out of her room right next to Rollies.
 "Angie, this is Special Agents Fox Mulder and Dana Scully. Agents, this is Angie Ramirez."

> "Oh yes, the pair who was threatened by Loubar." said Mulder and snapped his fingers. "I had forgotten about that." he admitted.
 "Rollie is in there." said Francis and pointed towards a door from

which they could all hear soft snoring. "He's been asleep ever since they arrived, never even stirred." Everyone turned towards the door, Francis shoved Angie into her room and closed the door before he followed the example of everyone else as he pulled out his gun and directed it at the door. They had all heard the door unlocking.

> "Geez, what a reception!" exclaimed 'Jim' and smiled at everyone. He slipped out of his trenchcoat and hung it up. 'Tom' followed him inside and got rid of his as well. Then they seemed to notice that the guns still were directed at them. "We can't both be Loubar." said 'Jim' and yanked his nose back and forth. "See, it's the real thing."
 "Who are you two, really?" asked Mulder. "We know you're not who you two claim to be, so who are you?" They didn't even blink, no change of expression whatsoever.

> "All right, I guess you deserve to hear the truth." said 'Tom' slowly. "I'm Da..."
 "Is it all right to come out now?" asked Angie and peeked out from her room. "You!" she exclaimed. "And you!"

> "... Erik Jonsson, pleased to meet you all." Francis raised an eyebrow, Erik hadn't even blinked but just changed what obviously would have been another lie and then given what had larger chances of actually being his real name.

> "I'm Niklas Jonsson, Eriks cousin." admitted Niklas reluctantly as he looked upon the surprised face of Angela Ramirez. "Nice to see you again miss Ramirez."
 "You've met him Angie?" exclaimed Mira in surprise.

> "I've met them both! Erik was the male star in a movie me and Rollie worked on a while ago, he saved our lives! Niklas is the guy who delivered the warning message."
 "That's why you two looked so darn familiar!" exclaimed Mira in surprise. "I've been screaming at myself for days now because I didn't know where I'd seen you two before."

> "It could also be because they're two of the richest men alive. Erik is the sole owner of HawkTech, the computer company. Niklas owns the European software branch."
 "This is all your fault you big

moron." sighed Niklas accusingly at Erik.

> "How was I supposed to know that Angie&Rollie was the pair who needed a safehouse? Now will you please put down those guns before I take them away from you?" he snapped at the four gunwielding men and women in front of them.
 "I don't think so..." said Mulder slowly. "I for one would *very* much like to hear why you two are pretending to be FBI agents."

> "Put the guns down." ordered Erik calmly. "Or I *will* disarm you all." Niklas sighed as he received a radio transmission from Erik.
 +On three?+ +one.+ +two.+ + three!+

> They both leapt into action, throwing knives were fired out of their sleeves and into their hands, before anyone had even seen them appear there, four knives shot out and struck four pistols. Two seconds later, Mulder, Scully, Francis and Mira found themselves standing on their toes with knives at their throats.
 "I've never really liked having a weapon pointed at me, but since you obviously have problems realizing that I guess you must really enjoy it?" said Erik slowly and coldly. "Now that we all know that we can kill you all before you'd even know it, I suggest a more friendly conversation, without weapons pointed at each other. Is that acceptable?" he asked but didn't wait for an answer. They both shoved their knives back into their sleeves, picked up the other knives and the guns. Erik shoved Francis and Scully's gun into their holsters and then took a chair at the table, Niklas made sure the safety was on and then he casually tossed the guns over to Mira and Mulder before he took another chair and waited.

> "Oh Angela, I guess you'd better wake Rollie up as well so we won't have to repeat this." said Niklas as he noticed the snoring coming from one of the bedrooms.

> "Well, time to play twenty questions I guess." said Niklas and smiled as Rollie staggered out and took a place at the table a couple of minutes later. He raised an eyebrow at Niklas and frowned as if he was thinking about something.
 "So, shoot." said Erik calmly and Rollie turned against him.

> "Erik! What are you doing 'ere?" exclaimed Rollie in surprise.
 "At the moment I'm just about to be asked why I was posing as an FBI agent with my cousin." replied Erik.

> "That's the one, yeah." said Mulder. "Why on earth are you two posing as FBI agents?"
 "I am about to tell you something that cannot be revealed to anyone outside of this room." said Niklas since he and Erik had decided that this was the best course of action. "I am a mutant and a member of the X-men under the codename Hawk." he said calmly. "I witnessed one decapitation and tried to detain the survivor for questioning. He was acting in self defense, there wasn't any doubt about that." said Niklas. "But the fireworks afterwards made me think that he might just be a mutant. If he is, he is in *serious* need of aid if his powers run wild like that. The X-men can provide training, aid and counseling. Help him get both his powers and life under control. But, the police arrived and I had to leave. I decided that I should look him up before one of his firework displays kill or hurts anyone innocent. Erik offered his help and I accepted. We knew that we would have to investigate any future crimescenes, so we got ourselves these cool fake ID's and pretended to be from the FBI."

> "You're a mutant? What are your powers?" asked Mulder curiously and leaned over the table.
 "Enhanced physical traits and shapeshifting." replied Niklas openly, trying to seem as honest as possible.

> "That's at least easy to prove, prove it." said Mulder and leaned back in his chair. Niklas reached out, copied Fox Mulder and slowly

turned into him, forcing sweat to appear on his forehead. He didn't want this to look too easy, he had no intentions of revealing just how powerful he really was. As Mulder, he raised his hands and looked at them. Looked down on his new body and chuckled.
 "Well mister Mulder, proof enough for ya?" he asked and winked at Mulder before he returned to his own body and sagged in relief, as if he had just been through a horrible ordeal.

> "Are you also a mutant, a X-man?" asked Mulder and looked over at Erik.
 "X-man? Hell no, I'm way to busy to fool around as a superhero. Running HawkTech is just about all I can handle at the moment. The only reason I'm doing this is because Niklas promised to improve the security systems protecting HawkTech from nerds trying to break into our computer network, like Angie over here." replied Erik and pointed an accusing finger at Angie.

> "I was sorta hoping that you had forgotten about that." said Angie and smiled apologetically.
 "When we were driving over here, our Assistant Director called and ordered us to cooperate with you two. You must have connections in high places..." said Mulder slowly. Neither Niklas or Erik said anything. "Who are they and where are they?"

> "I admit that I have a few contacts here and there, even a few in the FBI. But I won't reveal any of them." said Erik and crossed his arms over his chest.
 "We could arrest you..." said Scully threateningly.

> "I suppose you could, but who'd then haul your sorry asses away to safety when Cancerman comes knocking on your doors?"
 "Do you know who he is?" asked Mulder, tension oozing out of him.

> "No."
 "Do you know the people he works for?"

> "I'm aware of them, I can't really claim to know them though." Erik shrugged. "I've been trying to gain access to their computer network for almost three months now, without success."
 "You should have called me." said Niklas and smirked.

> "Yeah that's right, Hawk wasn't it?" said Angie suddenly. "You're the guy behind Hawk's Virus Workshop and Hawk's Fucking Great Privacy encryption right? The worlds most infamous Cracker."
 "I'm retired from the hackin' an' crackin' bit." said Niklas and winked at her. "Although you might be interested to know that I plan to release HFGP v2.0 next week, cracking that code should take about 2048 times longer then HFGP v1.75."

> "We could arrest Niklas here." suggested Mulder and pointed at Niklas who raised an eyebrow.
 "I could kill you from a hundred paces with a quarter, but you don't see me looking around for loose change, now do you? Let's just cut the crap, try to arrest me and I'll start looking for Loubar and this decapitating mutant on my own. You'd never be able to find me and various law enforcement people would be doing a fruitless search for me all over the world when they could be doing something useful instead." said Niklas. "Onwards to other questions Agent Mulder, pointless threats are just that, pointless."

> "What are your plans about Loubar?" asked Rollie who had spent his time rousing himself from the sleepy fogs that had clouded his mind just after waking up. Niklas pulled out a knife and slowly moved it over his own throat.
 "Does that answer your question?" he asked and sheathed the knife again.

>
 "Agent Mulder, we've been through this several times already. I will not reveal anything about the X-men and Erik won't reveal any of his contacts. We're not intimidated by your empty threats at all. So why don't you just give up? My patience is wearing thin..."

> "As if that is supposed to intimidate me." huffed Mulder.
 "It should Fox Mulder, oh yes it should intimidate you. You've been

exposed to mindcontrol before haven't you?" asked Niklas after a tip from Erik over the Mioplant. "I can feel it, see it. Your mind is like an open book, your surface thoughts and emotions are projected *very* strongly. I don't even need to be a very skilled telepath in order to see into your head. The loss of your sister, your partners abduction, memories erased, the Consortium, your Assistant Director... A mind as open as yours is a mind very easily manipulated, I could make all of you in here forget ever meeting us. Make you all lose memory of this entire conversation as well as any memories you have of us not being who we claim we are. The truth would be lost, the truth distorted. What a shame..." said Niklas and leaned back in his chair.

> "So why don't you?" asked Scully. "It would obviously be the best for you."
 "Perhaps... But erasing memories aren't something I enjoy doing, Oh I will do it if really becomes necessary, but I'd rather not."

> "So what do you want? A sworn promise that we won't reveal your secrets?" asked Mira. "Enter our minds to make sure that we'll keep it and do god knows what else while you're in there?"
 "That would be nice, but I won't have to enter your minds. I can tell a lie without entering any minds, just saying it is good enough for me." Niklas blinked as he suddenly got an e-mail from Erik, one of HawkTechs flying cameras had just detected a group of mercenaries that were preparing to attack Duncan MacLeod, and they had some sort of electronic device that enabled them to track him down. /That's why all the morons in town know where to find him, he's carrying a tracker! Wellwell now, if *we* got our hands on one of those trackers, we'd be able to find him in notime!/ thought Niklas and faked a phonecall to himself. The cell phone he carried in a beltclip buzzed and he picked it up. "I'm here." he replied. "Yeah." he said after a while of listening to his Mioplant computer generated speech. "Where are they now?" He waited a few seconds. "Thanks. Stay with them! Bye." he said and hung up. "Well now, Loubar has gathered a small group of mercs, they might know where to find him. So, either we get that promise, or we leave you here to fend for yourselves. Nothing of what you has found out about us will leave this room, in return, we'll track down Loubar and if he isn't the decapitator, we'll track him down as well. In addition, I think we can put a little pressure on the Cancerman to leave you two alone for a while." said Niklas with a nod at Mulder&Scully. "I'll be needin' your replies pretty fast, because in less then two minutes, we're going to leave this room."

>
 "I can't believe this!" exclaimed Mulder as he followed the car Erik was driving. "I actually promised to keep my mouth shut and he said I meant it! Open mind, hah!" He snorted and shook his head in disgust. "Hiding the truth..." he muttered and tightened his grip on the steering wheel until his fingers started to become white as his bloodflow was hampered.

> "What choice did we have? If he really is a telepath, he could have erased our minds if he felt we were a threat to him or his cousin."
 "I think Erik is a mutant as well."

> "Why do you think that?"
 "Do you remember what I asked him? 'Are you also a mutant, a X-man?' and he replied 'X-man? Hell no, I'm way to busy to fool around as a superhero.'." said Mulder. "He never denied being a mutant, just being a member of the X-men. At the pier, he pulled Niklas up on the pier with one hand, pulled him up as if he didn't weigh any more then a six-pack of beers! And the running part! Did you see them take off there at the pier? Niklas was the first to run, but Erik caught up with him within a second and then slowed down to maintain the same speed. They both ran *much* faster then I could,

not a problem for a mutant with enhanced abilities. But I doubt that a normal human could keep up with someone who is supposed to have quite an advantage over average humans in things like this." Scully shrugged.

> "You might be right, but what good does it do us?"
 "Perhaps nothing, I'm not just so sure that Niklas is the greater threat here. I think Erik might be just as dangerous, perhaps even more so since we don't know anything about his powers. I also didn't like the way he said that he had 'a few' contacts in the FBI, 'a few' indicates that there's more than one. At least one of them must be rather high up on the organization if he could get Skinner to order us around. Hell, it might even be Skinner!" said Mulder with disgust. "Do me a favor will ya? Use your magic fingers on that laptop of yours, send a e-mail to Frohike and ask for any and all information he can get on the cousins and HawkTech." He saw that Scully squirmed in her seat and frowned.

> "Why me?" she complained. Mulder smiled at her, his worries suddenly banished at the chance for some playful banter with his partner.
 "Because I know he will work much harder if it's you who ask him, especially if you do it nicely, teasing him a little." said Mulder. "Y'know, do your sexy Scully act."

> "Frohike is actually rather cute, perhaps I should date him?" mused Scully out loud to herself and Mulder almost missed a turn in shock.
 "No way I'm letting you date that pervert!" he exclaimed, stared at her and only then noticed the gleam in her eyes. "Oooooohhh, I'm going to get you for that one Scully."

> "Promises, promises." she sighed and pulled out her laptop with a girlish giggle.

> Niklas leapt over to the building they were looking for and checked in with Erik. He was just about to pick the lock to the basement. The flying cameras that kept an eye on Fox Mulder and Dana Scully showed clear pictures as they used the front entrance. He wasn't in the mood to wait for reinforcements though, the mercs were holed up on the top floor. He jumped down to their balcony and peeked in through the window, three of them was playing poker around a small table. Two were sitting in a couch, looking at a large map with the tracking device lying on top of the map. He checked the cameras keeping an eye at them and saw that one was in the bathroom and the last one slept in a bedroom.
 +We've got company, two men, looks as if they're picking the lock to our target apartment.+ transmitted Erik openly. +It's that Immortal friend of Duncan and another one, I think it's Russell Nash, a guy who was suspected for a few beheadings back in the eighties. If that is correct, he's also an Immortal.+ transmitted Erik over his and Niklas private frequency so Mulder and Scully wouldn't hear anything they shouldn't.

> "You don't know?" asked Niklas curiously.
 +Gimme a break will you, HawkTech hadn't been founded back when this happened. They've got the door unlocked.+ Niklas peeked inside again and saw how Nash and his friend rushed inside with their swords raised. The mercenaries were stunned, but three of them recovered fast enough to get weapons in their hands and pull back while there others were killed or taken out of action. Niklas nodded to himself, these two were *good*. They must have been around for quite a while in order to learn how to fight like that. Duncans friend took a bullet in the stomach but managed to shove a sword into the head of the shooter before he doubled over in pain. The Nash fellow kicked one of them unconscious and slammed the hilt of his sword onto the head of the last standing man. He didn't spare a look for his friend, he quickly finished the guy who had been in the bathroom and now tried to escape by cutting his legs off and then shoving his sword into the falling

mans chest. A bleary-eyed merc who emerged from the bedroom got knocked down by a hard left uppercut. /Ouch, effective.../ he thought to himself.

> "Did you see that?" he asked Erik.
 +Yeah, I just electrocuted the elevator. Mulder and Scully are stuck there, they won't interrupt for a while.+ said Erik. +I'll be at the door in twenty seconds, if they run, stop 'em.+ Niklas thought back at the way they had taken care of the mercs and then considered his odds of making it alone against them, they weren't very good. At least not in his current body... He could cheat though, he had quite a lot of blood in his system. But he didn't know when he would be able to find the time and privacy to feed again, so he didn't want to spend any if it wasn't necessary. It turned out that it wasn't, the two Immortals gathered up the living ones and tied them up, preparing for an interrogation by the looks of it. None of them took any notice of the electronic device on the map, Niklas decided that saving that was top priority. He turned into Illyana and teleported it to his hand with a tiny stepping disc. He reconsidered and 'ported it down to the car before he resumed his own body. +You ready to make an entrance?+ asked Erik suddenly.

> "Yeah, let's see who they are." replied Niklas, rose up and knocked on the glass window of the balcony door. The two Immortals spun around with wild looks in their faces and their swords pointed at him. He kept on smiling and waved at them through the window. He heard Eriks faint chuckles over the radio, where Erik mostly relied on brute force and a ruthlessness that sometimes scared Niklas, he relied on humor. The Immortals looked at each other and shrugged, then Nash opened the door and quickly stepped back a few steps. Niklas walked in and closed the door behind him. "Well if it isn't Russell Nash and Duncans Immortal friend." exclaimed Niklas cheerfully. "I'm Jim Olsen, would you be interested in giving a donation to the home of retired Jehovah Shriners?" he asked. They Immortals exchanged confused looks and then centered their attention on Niklas again.
 "Who are you?" asked the unknown guy. "What are you doing here?"

> "Well, actually I was here to take these guys out of business and ask them a few questions, but since I already got what I wanted from them, I thought I'd ask you two why you are here. Does it have anything to do with the fact that Duncan is followed by every merc in town and all the Immortals except you two?" They exchanged look again.
 "Are you a friend of Duncans?" asked Russell cautiously.

> "Naw, I've only met him once and then he shoved his Katana into my chest. I thought that was very impolite of him! It was a perfectly good shirt he ruined, blood just won't wash out properly and that nasty gash was not making the kind of fashion statement I was looking for."
 "You've got exactly three seconds to explain who you are and how you found out about Immortals, if it's not a *very* good answer, you'll die." said the stranger coldly.

> +cli-click+
 "If you wondered what you just heard behind you, allow me to enlighten you. That was the sound of a buckshot being loaded in a Winchester Defender shotgun, from this distance I really don't think he will miss. I know it won't kill you, but if I take your heads while you're still trying to patch yourselves up, you'll die all right." said Niklas and pulled out his Katana from his trenchcoat.

>
 "Are you Hunters?" asked Methos and tried to keep a cool, unfazed exterior.

> "Nope, I stopped hunting a few years back. It just wasn't fun anymore. What has that got to do with this?" asked the weird young

man in front of them. Methos didn't fail to notice the way he held himself and his sword though, the kid certainly wasn't a beginner. Methos couldn't be certain just by looking, but he was willing to wager a fair amount of money that the kid possessed skills that someone as youngish looking as him shouldn't be able to possess. He had to be Immortal, but Methos hadn't felt his Quickening and he still didn't. Can he somehow have discovered how to hide his Quickening? he wondered and a glance at Connor told him that he was thinking about the same thing. At least they didn't know who they really were, he had called them Russell Nash and "Duncans Immortal friend". Methos was listening for all he was worth, but he couldn't hear, smell or even feel the slightest bit of movement behind them. It could be ten armed men, it might be no one. He just didn't know and that wasn't a feeling that Methos liked.

> "So, what now?" asked Connor and Methos chuckled, the MacLeod backbone reared it's ugly face again.
 "Well, you could start by telling who you two are and what you're doing here in New York." said the young man that had called himself Jim Olsen.

> "We're looking for Duncan." replied Connor hesitantly.
 "You and everyone else in the city." said a voice darkly somewhere behind them, Methos couldn't quite sense where it came from, but he had limited it to a small area right behind them.

> "Why are you looking for Duncan." asked Jim calmly.
 "To help him." replied Methos after a few moments of silence.

> "They're telling the truth." said the voice behind them and now Methos knew where he was. He looked at Connor and nodded. Connor rolled his eyes and then leapt forward, lunging for the Jim while Methos jumped aside and charged the man with the shotgun.

+boooooom+ +cli-click+ +boooooom+ +cli-click+ +boooooom+ +cli-click+ +boooooom+ +cli-click+

> Methos was pressed up against a wall and he groaned as everything turned dark.

> "Wow, you're good. Even better then Duncan." exclaimed Niklas as he desperately tried to fend off the charging man. "By the way, did you hear those four shots? That means that there's only three rounds left, but that's more then enough to calm you down. How about just lowering your sword so we can talk about this?" tried Niklas reasonably and got a slash across his stomach due to his carelessness. "I guess not!" he exclaimed and spent some blood to become faster, a Discipline called Celerity among the Kindred.

Suddenly it was his opponent who desperately had to defend himself as Niklas broke his charge and launched into a deadly offensive. He managed to cut open several minor wounds on his opponent but yelped in pain as he suddenly had a Katana shoved into his left shoulder.
 +boooooom+ +cli-click+ +boooooom+ +cli-click+ +boooooom+

> Niklas saw how Russell's eyes shot up in suprise as Erik shot him in the back, the three last rounds truly stunned him. He might have died anyway, but Niklas didn't take any chances. He shoved his Katana through his opponents heart just to make sure.
 "Thanks." said Niklas and looked at the Katana sticking out of his left shoulder. "Pull it out." he said and Erik yanked it out for him. "There goes the trenchcoat as well." he said, trying to make light of the situation. It was hurting like hell, but it would patch itself up without any need for him to waste any blood on healing himself. Unless he had to use his shoulder for something that is, he truly hoped not. Then he looked around the room, there was plenty of food around. He shrugged, healed himself swiftly and then had his fill from the unconscious mercenaries.

> "I'll go get the feds out of the elevator, I'd really like to have our 'friends' out of here, but if the feds don't see their bloody

swords and dead bodies, they'll believe that we caused all this." said Erik and sighed. "Oh well, you can't have it all. I just hope we'll be able to get them out of here before they heal and decides to just walk out."
 "Me too, if the shit hits the fan, I guess we'll have to mindwipe them."

> "I don't know for sure, these two has seen a lot. Perhaps they're ready to accept something like this. But let's hope they won't find out, I'll go get them." said Erik again and walked out of the apartment while Niklas decided to perform a little first aid. If Scully saw his clothes and no wounds, she'd start asking questions. He removed his damaged clothes, shifted into Jean and repaired them with her telekinetic powers. He then returned to his own body and got dressed in clothes that were as good as new just ten seconds before Erik returned with a pair of dust-covered FBI agents.
 "What happened to you two? Were you attacked by a dust-devil?" he asked and smiled slightly. They both raised one eyebrow and then really took in the room, they both looked a little sick but controlled it.

> "Jesus Christ!" exclaimed Mulder as he looked around the room. "Was this really necessary?"
 "It wasn't us." said Niklas and shrugged, then he directed their attention to the two Immortals.

> "Here's our second decapitator, it looks as if this guy is a third." he explained.
 "Hey, that's that guy... What's his name? Russell Nash!" exclaimed Mulder. "He was suspected of a murder in the garage of Madison Square Garden back in the eighties."

> "Really?" asked Erik and bent down to get a closer look at Russell. "Well, I guess he won't do something like that for a while." he said after checking for a pulse. "He and his companion tried to cut us down when we arrived, so... I shot 'em."
 "We heard the shots when we climbed up from that elevator." said Scully. "Was it really necessary to kill them both?"

> "They were stubborn. Hell, they hardly went down at all."

> ***

> "Hey guys, look at that! Isn't that the new X-man, Hawk?" asked Paige and everyone turned towards the TV. Emma raised an eyebrow and directed her attention at the TV as well. Paige had been watching the news, it now reported from a massmurder crime scene in New York. Two men wielding swords had killed five men and knocked two others unconscious before they were shot down by two FBI Agents who had vanished from the scene, leaving two other Agents to answer questions. Emma raised an eyebrow as the reporter identified Niklas and Erik as two FBI agents by the name Jim and Tom Olsen 'according to his sources'.
 "What izzat crap? FBI agent, naway!" exclaimed Jubilee in disbelief.

> "Perhaps he has been pretending, infiltrating us for a purpose." said Emma to herself, but loud enough for the others to hear.
 "Could be Em', but I dinnae think so." said Sean thoughtfully and Emma twitched, she hadn't even seen him enter the room. She itched to find out what the people she had assigned to follow him had found out, she decided that she wouldn't wait for them to report in, she'd call and see what they had found out as soon as possible.

> *Yeah, I find it very hard to believe that. If he were undercover, he shouldn't have acted like he has, attracting attention to himself. I think it's now that he's undercover, I just dunno for what reason./* commented Jonothon Starsmore telepathically. Sean left the room, muttering about calling some of his old contacts to hear what they had to say. Emma retreated to her office and picked up the telephone, she was just about to start calling the people she had spying on Niklas and Erik, then she sighed and punched in another number.

> +Xaviers.+ said Bishops firm voice on the other end.
 "Good day,

may I speak with Charles?" she asked coldly. She felt a need to warn him about Niklas, just in case he would turn out to be dangerous for them. She almost laughed at the thought that she actually were calling Charles to warn him about something that could be dangerous. If she had been told that a few years ago, she would have laughed in the face of the one telling her that. /I have changed./ she thought to herself and considered if she should prepare to set an assassin on Niklas and Erik. /A little.../ she added to herself and allowed herself a chuckle.

>

>
 "It seems to be working." commented Niklas as Erik navigated the streets of New York, following the directions they were getting from the tracking device. He looked back at the tied up bodies in the back of the car, neither of them had woken up yet. "How long do you think it will take before they wake up?" he asked.

> "Wouldn't suprise me much if they already are awake, the wounds are gone." said Erik and Niklas turned around again. "They're probably just trying to find out just who the fuck we are and trying to free themselves, I know that's what I would be trying to do."
 "You may be correct." admitted Niklas, now when he considered it more closely he was prepared to swear that they really were awake, just waiting. "Oh well, they might just as well amuse themselves until we have MacLeod back there with them. Do you have a place where we can keep them?"

> +ring+
 Niklas reached for his cell phone and put it to his ear.

> "Jim Olsen."
 +Hey, we've got a lead on Loubar.+ said Agent Mulder in the other end.

> "Shoot."
 +Mira and Francis found something out, we're sitting outside another warehouse in some sort of high-tech car from Tyler FX. Where are you?+

> "Following a lead on the decapitator." lied Niklas smoothly.
 +Speaking of decapitators, the swordsmen from the apartment have vanished from the morgue.+

> "What?! How?" exclaimed Niklas and false suprise and smirked at the two men in the back seat.
 +Nobody knows for sure, the staff had been gassed, the security cameras put out of commission and all exits were guarded. There's no way anyone could have gotten outside with two corpses.+

> "Not anything? Nothing on the gas? Any witnesses? Hell, someone must have seen something! Dead bodies just don't wake up and walk out on their own." fumed Niklas.
 +Well... Not usually.+ muttered Mulder in the other end. +No, no evidence, no witnesses, not anything at all. As far as we can tell, they couldn't have walked out either. There were people around the exits at all time, someone would have seen them.+ /Thank goddess for Illyana's stepping discs!/ thought Niklas with a large smile.

> "Well, this looks like a dead end." said Niklas slowly. "We'll be there." he finished and hung up.
 "Well?"

> "It seems like two bodies vanished from the morgue without a trace. Our friends have also located a hideout where we might find Loubar."
 "You think we should go after him?" asked Erik and raised one eyebrow.

> "One less threat to Duncan and I *really* don't think our friends should be allowed to get a hold of the tracker unit Loubar must have. They would be upon Duncan in a flash and who knows what they might find out then?"
 "Didn't think about that." admitted Erik. "He must have a tracker as well, we'll have to destroy it or at least get our hands on it before they do. Come to think of it, everyone who has been after Duncan before must also have had some sort of tracker. But

we never did find any, that means that there must be someone following him around. Duncan could be taking them with him of course, but they probably wouldn't work after a Quickening so I don't see why he would bother. But it's depressing, we're so close. This tracker isn't too accurate, he could be anything from five to fivehundred meters from here. But it cannot be much more then that. Oh well, we can find him again if need be. I just hope some bugger won't take his head."

> "Shit, I didn't ask where they were." exclaimed Niklas. "Do you have a location?" he asked.
 "Yeah, got five cameras following them around at all time. We're heading there now." replied Erik.

> "What are we going to do with our 'guests'?" asked Niklas and looked back at them. "We can't just leave them like this, if some Immortal managed to open the car they'll lose their heads."
 "I'll have some of my men guarding it, if someone tries anything, they'll end up at the morgue."

>

> Part 5, Even the best of plans can fail...

>
 +dunk+ +dunk+ Everybody turned to the door as someone knocked two times, Rollie noticed that everyone except him and Angie reached for guns. They were kept out of sight, but they were available if they would be needed.

> "Who is it?" asked Rollie cautiously and moved over so he protected Angie with his own body. She huffed but he ignored her protest, if Loubar indeed was in here, he couldn't afford to take any chances at all.
 +cli-click+

> "Next time, don't forget that there are more then one way to get into this thing." They all slowly turned around and came face to face with Erik who was scratching his head with the barrel of his shotgun. The doors opened and Niklas entered, carrying two large bags in his hands.
 "So, what's up?" he asked and dumped the bags before he closed the door behind him.

> "How did you find us?" asked Mira slowly and Rollie nodded, it was beginning to feel slightly crowded with eight people inside the van. Erik smiled evilly.
 "Francis, would you mind checking the sole of your shoe?" he asked innocently. Francis bent his leg and checked out the underside of his shoe. Rollie reached out and tore away a little black bulge that looked out of place. He looked more closely at it and suddenly smiled.

> "A tracker." He chuckled to himself. "I was wondering what it was that caused all the strange disturbances, I thought it was something Loubar was up to." he said and pointed to the monitors, there had been distortions and some other weird effects lately. Niklas frowned and Erik raised his eyebrows, his eyes traveled over the equipment in the van once and he shook his head.
 "There's nothing in the tracker that would affect your gizmos like this..." he said, clearly puzzled. Rollie frowned.

> "Radiation." exclaimed Niklas with a device in his hand. He spun slowly around in a full circle with his eyes on the device. "It's coming from the warehouse, or that direction anyway." he said and dropped the device into one of the bags. "It's not lethal, but it's so high that it cannot be natural. There's some sort of radioactive material in the area."
 "So, what have you found out so far?" asked Erik and leaned at the wall, the shotgun once again hidden by his trenchcoat. Niklas opened one of the large bags and pulled out Kevlar vests for everyone. Agent Scully and Rollie who were closest looked down into the other bag and gasped.

> "Blimey!" exclaimed Rollie. "There's enough firepower for half an army."
 "It might be needed, if anyone wants something, take it." said Erik and shrugged. "Once again, what do we know?"

> "Well, one of our informers revealed that Loubar used this place, so far we've seen five people enter it without coming out. Blue is sneaking through the grounds right now, trying to find a good place to check them out from." said Francis.
 "Who is Blue?" asked Niklas with a confused look on his face.

> "A small robot, it has proved to be very useful in the past." said Francis and shrugged. "Heat readings suggest that there's at least eleven people in there, we think Loubar is there, but until Blue has found a way in, we can't say for sure."
 "I called our assistant director and got a team from the local office. They're currently trying to coordinate forces with officers from Midtown south." said Agent Mulder calmly.

> "Van Duran agreed, when it's time, every available police and a ten man SWAT team will be ready to join the FBI forces." commented Mira.
 "If that is the image from Blue, we might not have the luxury to wait for them." said Erik as his eyes swept over the monitors and suddenly jerked back to one of them. Rollie swore, a man was looking down at Blue with a gun in his hands. The little robot had been discovered, the man reached for a radio on his hip, clearly intending to report the encounter. "Niklas!" snapped Erik and Niklas reached down into the bag, pulled out a rifle Rollie remembered from Australia. It was a Steyr AUG, an automatic rifle that the army down under sometimes used. Niklas threw open one of the back doors and Rollie watched in horrified fascination at the monitor.

> +tffffpth+
 A second after the faint, muted sound, Rollie saw on the monitor how the man was thrown back from Blue, his head torn apart with brutal efficiency. The radio dropped from his hands before any report had been made. Rollie closed his eyes for a second, he had seen people being shot before, but that didn't make it easier. Niklas jumped back inside and closed the doors, he removed the clip and pressed in a spare bullet from the bottom of the bag before he replaced the clip.

> "You guys aren't entirely what you seem, are you?" asked Agent Mulder and stared coldly at them.
 "You behave more like trained assassins than computer nerds."

> "Well, I could get us into the Pentagon if you wanted. But any nerd could do that, how about something a little more challenging? Kreml? The KGB? Black Air? Operation Zero Tolerance? Or perhaps you'd like me to make a new operating system, it's no biggie." said Niklas and smiled.
 "An explanation would do just fine, but we'd better move. They'll find the body sooner or later, we have to do something fast." said Mulder, Mira and Francis nodded in agreement.

>
 Duncan slowly moved away from the truck, the car with the Immortals he had felt had driven away so fast that he hadn't been able to get back to the car he used in time. He had settled for watching the truck, he had almost managed to sneak up to it when the door had opened and that guy who could hide his Quickening had leapt out, fired a shot and then jumped back inside. Duncan decided that he could watch from a distance, it apparently wasn't safe to stay so close to the van. /Tyler FX?/ He shook his head in confusion and waited. There had been other Immortals in the car, both of them had felt familiar. He would almost have been prepared to swear that it had been Methos and Connor, but they wouldn't have anything with this guy to do. At least he hoped not, Methos might be untrustworthy but Connor would never betray him, Duncan was sure of that. Of course, they might have been fooled since this guy was able to hide his Quickening, this made him more dangerous than any other Immortal Duncan could mention. He would be able to sneak up to other Immortals and cut their heads off and they'd never know that another Immortal had been nearby. Duncan swore to himself that he'd end this threat

once and for all.

>

>
 "Well, here we are. You look sexy in black." commented Mulder as he climbed up the ladder while Dana guarded his back. He quickly studied the roof, hauled himself up, checked it once more and then signed for her to climb up after him while he watched her back. When she was up, she first checked the roof herself and then slapped him in the back of the head. "What was *that* for?" he complained whiningly, she hadn't slapped hard, just a playful swat. But he was overplaying for all he was worth.

> "You don't look half-bad yourself, but keep it to yourself until we're out of here. I don't want to start laughing at the moment." she joked and winked at him and then took the lead before he could do it. He made a face and then followed, guarding her back as they made their way to a door leading down into the lower floors of the warehouse. He picked up the strange device Erik had pressed into his hands from his pocket, put it into the lock and eight seconds later he heard a faint click as the door unlocked. He blinked and put the device away, he'd find some way to keep it. He had a suspicion that it might come in handy in the future. They waited and then flung open the door, he went in high, she low. There wasn't any sign of anyone and he had kept his grip on the handle of the door so it hadn't slammed into the wall. He quickly closed the door and then followed Dana to a ledge, overlooking the entire warehouse. Niklas and Erik had offered to go through the front, leaving the roof for him and Dana while Francis and Mira took the back. The reinforcements were already on their way, but they couldn't afford to wait for them. It was only a matter of time before someone missed the dead man, they had to chance going in on their own. Angie and Rollie were unprotected though, Niklas given them a pair of MAC-10 with a few extra clips so they could defend themselves, Francis had radioed the reinforcements and told a couple of officers to guard the van as soon as they arrived. They hoped it would be enough, Angie and Rollie had in fact both wanted to help out by coming along themselves. But Mira had screamed at them as loud as she dared for three minutes until they both had agreed to stay in the van. He looked as Dana pulled out her surprise from one of her pockets and Mulder reached for his own. They both held grenades and Mulder really hoped that Erik hadn't lied to them. But they had all agreed to wait, if nothing happened, they would wait for the reinforcements. If something did happen, then they'd go ahead on their own.

+ratatatatatatatatatatatatatata+ +crash+

> Mulders head swung around and he winced as he saw a dark shape in a trenchcoat come flying in through a window, landing inside. Mulder felt faintly ill as he saw the bloody chest and even more ill as he saw who it was. Niklas./ Scully threw her grenade and Mulder dropped his as well, hoping that they would have the desired effect. Scully's hit the floor first and a brief flash followed. Mulder felt the creeping sensation as the Electro Magnetic Pulse flowed through his body. Every lamp blacked out, every computer went dead, a few fans stopped working and every other electric device in the room suddenly wasn't working any more. His grenade hit the floor and let out a woooooosh, two seconds later a huge white cloud covered everything within ten meters of the place where the grenade had struck the floor.

> "Freeze! Federal Agents!" he screamed at the top of his lungs.

"Drop your weapons!"
 +crash+

> Another window crashed as a body came flying through it, a split second later Erik jumped inside with a furious look on his face.
 +boooooom+ +cli-click+ +boooooom+ +cli-click+ +boooooom+ +cli-click+

+boooooom+ +cli-click+ +boooooom+ +cli-click+ +boooooom+ +cli-click+
+boooooom+ +ka-booom+ Mulder pulled back as one of the craters suddenly exploded, throwing Erik back towards a wall. But not until five men had been brutally torn apart by his shotgun.

> "Freeze! Drop your weapons!" yelled Mira and Francis in chorus as they emerged through a door on his left, down on the bottom floor. He spotted a man with a machinegun directing it at them and squeezed off a few rounds towards him. He fell back in a puddle of blood without ever getting his chance to shoot at the two officers. Dana downed a woman armed with a revolver as she sneaked up behind Erik who somehow had managed to get back on his feet. Mulder could see from up here that he was bleeding from his left shoulder, leaving a trail of blood behind. He had put the shotgun aside and was now holding a UZI in his left hand and a H&K MP5 in his right, using them like he had been born with weapons in his hands. Mulder spared a look towards Niklas, to see if he was moving, perhaps he hadn't died. What he saw made him blink, the body was missing! Only a puddle of blood revealed that there had been a body there. Bullets were flying everywhere and he let out a pained yell as one grazed his left temple. Mulder looked over at Scully and relaxed as he noticed that she hadn't noticed, with all the bullets flying around she had other things to worry about. It was only a scratch, but she would probably insist that he'd pull back if she saw it. Large wooden crates were burning, he heard sirens outside though and relaxed as he realized that the reinforcements had arrived.
 "Loubar!" Mulder heard the scream and looked in that direction, a man was running for all he was worth with Erik in pursuit. The man turned around a corner in the maze of craters and dropped something behind.

> "Erik! Watch out!" yelled Mulder, but it was too late. He saw the grenade himself as he turned around the same corner, he leapt back just as it went off.
 +booom+

> A wooden splinter shot into Mulders left arm and he swore at the sudden pain, he desperately searched for Loubar, but he couldn't see him anywhere. The battle had calmed down, four policemen had rushed in through the front doors and more were coming all the time, slowly spreading out through the room. Mulder felt more than heard it and he threw himself at Scully, he saw Loubar suddenly hauling himself up on the same platform he and Scully were standing on. Mulder pointed his gun towards Loubar and pulled the trigger.
 +click+

> Damn!/ he swore, it was empty or jammed, he didn't know witch. He slammed into Scully, pushing her aside just as Loubar pointed his own gun towards them and fired.

> +kaboom+
 Mulder winced as the bullet grazed his body on his right side, it hurt like hell. Loubar was still holding his gun towards them but he was suddenly knocked aside as a wood board slammed into him, seemingly coming out of nowhere. Loubar dropped his gun and gasped in pain, Mulder reached for Scullys pistol that she had dropped and aimed it towards Loubar. But he was already in motion, rushing through the door he and Scully had entered through. Mulder fired the rest of the clip, four bullets, but didn't hit the devilishly fast Victor Loubar as he made it out onto the roof. Mulder rushed after him, reloading Scullys gun just as he slammed the door open and rushed out on the roof. He spun around, tried to hear or see anything, anything at all. He blinked as Niklas staggered out through the door, his suit and trenchcoat covered with blood, cuts in his face and a large pistol in his right hand.

> "Shit! Lay down, wait for the paramedics!" said Mulder but Niklas shook his head.
 "No time for that crap." he said and his eyes darted everywhere, his sunglasses had been lost somewhere and Mulder

now understood why he wore them. His eyes were shining red, they glowed in the dark. He sniffed and took off running, Mulder followed him hesitantly. Niklas suddenly stopped, spun around. "Watch out!" he screamed and fired a shot at something behind Mulder who dived down and rolled around to avoid whatever it was. He heard a grunt and a gun went off, he looked right at Niklas so he saw the bullet hit him straight in the stomach, he saw the blood suddenly exploding out of the wound and then, nothing. He saw nothing but white skin through the tear in Niklas clothes. Niklas emptied the gun, six shots rang out and Mulder looked behind to see a man being ripped apart. There was no other way to describe it, whenever a bullet from Niklas gun struck him, a hole was torn through his entire body. His chest was already a gaping hole, large enough to let a cat walk right through it. His head was one bloody mix of crushed bones and flesh and there was a hole where his genitals should be. He had been smeared up against a ventilation pipe and had apparently been thrown at it with such force that he was now attached to it, the dead body was held upright against the pipe. Niklas reloaded the gun and took off in the same direction he had followed before the man appeared and Mulder ran after him. They reached the edge of the roof at the same time, just in time to see Loubar jump into one of the cars the police had used. He took off but Niklas and Mulder managed to put a few shots in the car before he vanished behind a building. "Bloody hell!" yelled Niklas in frustration. "How was your partner?" he asked then, concern in his voice. Mulder paled, turned white as a sheet.

> "W-wh-what?" he stammered and ran away without waiting for a reply, cursing at himself for not checking on her before he ran after Loubar. He rushed inside and shoved a man in a trenchcoat leaning over her aside. He dropped down and gasped as he saw her, she was bleeding from a wound in her stomach and he cried out in anguish. "*Scully*!" he yelled. "*Paramedics*!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!" he roared, temporarily silencing everything else in the warehouse.
 "You will die here." said a voice behind him, but Mulder didn't care. The only thing that existed in his world at the moment was his bleeding partner. He flipped her trenchcoat aside, removed the Kevlar vest, ripped her white blouse open and gasped as he saw the wound. He tore her blouse completely apart, pressed the wadded cloth at the wound, hoping to block the blood flowing from her body.

> "Butt off MacLeod, we'll talk later." said Niklas suddenly and bent down beside Mulder. "Don't bother trying to cut my head off, I'm not one of you." said Niklas and pulled out a small black bag from inside his trenchcoat. He handed Mulder a wad of cotton, gauze and disinfection, picked up a shot already prepared, tested it just to make sure and then injected it into her chest. Her eyes opened wide and she gasped in pain. Niklas forced her mouth open and shoved a rod that looked like it was made out of rubber between her teeth. "Bite down on this, hard." he told her. He looked over at Mulder, took the disinfection and gestured for him to remove the wadded cloth he pressed at her wound. Mulder did so and Niklas poured out the small bottle over the wound. Scully convulsed, her whole body shook in agony. Mulder pressed the cotton-gauze wad down on the wound with his right hand, took her right hand in his left. Niklas looked around and frowned when he saw a team of paramedics coming up the stairs. "Sorry Mulder, but I can't let them take a look at me. I have to go. I'll be at the hospital later." he said and got up. "Duncan, I guess you don't want them seeing your bloody clothes either, come." he said and rushed out through the door, Mulder caught a brief look at the one called MacLeod and gasped as he recognized him from the police sketches and the pictures in the books he had found.
 "Mul... *cough*... Mu." Scully said and Mulder turned his attention to her

instead. The rubber rod had fallen out of her mouth, her eyes were slightly glazed and unfocused.

> "Shhh Scully, it's going to be all right. You'll be fine. Don't try to talk, the paramedics here." he said and they were. They carefully moved her over to a gurney and carried her down the stairs and out through the main entrance. Mulder spotted Mira and Francis who were busy rounding up surviving suspects. "I'm following her to the hospital!" he screamed over at them. "You've got my number." He didn't wait to see if they had heard him, he directed all his attention at his wounded partner.

> "Cut the crap Duncan, I don't have time for it." said Niklas annoyedly as Duncan pulled his sword out. "Take this instead, it should block the effects of the tracker on you." he said and tossed him what looked like a clock but in reality was a device configured to block the frequency the tracker used. "Me or my cousin will find you later, now I have to get the hell out of here before some smartass want to check my 'injuries'." He saw how Duncan tossed the device behind his back. "Do as you wish, but every hitman in town is looking for you and thanks to the tracker it won't take them long."
 "Why should I trust you?"

> "My honest face?" queried Niklas and smiled as he climbed down the ladder. He saw the reporters approaching him and swore, he simply couldn't wind up on the six o'clock news. He pulled out a gasgrenade, used the "even flow" setting and ran with the grenade in his hands. Smoke spewed forth from it, not in a sudden explosion like the one Scully had used in the warehouse, but in an even flow that covered him up rather nicely as he ran as fast as he could down the street, his face hidden in the smoke. He dropped the grenade and took another one out. This one he threw in front of himself, it covered a large area in smoke. It wouldn't stay long, not out in the open. But it did give him enough time to jump into a car and close the door. He pulled out the Master Key System Erik had supplied, he shoved the thin metal rod into the lock, it adjusted itself to the lock for a few seconds and then formed into the proper key. He started the car and sighed in relief as he drove away, barely missing a squadcar as he exited the remains of the cloud of smoke. He pulled out the tracker and smirked, Duncan was moving. He had retrieved the device, it would block the tracker he already had but the device itself was a tracker as well, working on a different frequency. Perhaps he would be easier to reason with after a good nights sleep, at least Niklas hoped so. He checked with his Mioplant, Erik had gotten away. He was injured though, he didn't have Niklas possibility to use his Kindred powers to heal himself so it would take a few days for him to heal. Unless he submitted himself to a HawkTech regenerator of course, that would lessen the time considerably. The tracking device meant for Duncan that Erik carried revealed that he was almost back at the hotel by now so Niklas sent him an e-mail asking him to bring a fresh set of clothes for him so he wouldn't have to walk into the hotel himself. Twenty minutes later, Niklas drove them towards the hospital where Scully had been admitted. Both of them in new clothes, Erik bandaged and disinfected. It didn't take them long to locate the two agents, Scully was in an operating room while Mulder paced the corridor outside.
 "Hey, how is she?" asked Erik and slowly lowered himself to a chair, Niklas briefly considered it but decided to remain standing and convince Agent Mulder to sit down instead. After a five minute monologue that Mulder didn't seem to hear at all, Niklas rolled his eyes and electrocuted Mulder with the electrodes operated into his fingers. He grunted in satisfaction and maneuvered the limp body into a chair. Then he noticed the bleeding, Mulder had been injured as well but he had put it aside in order to take care of his

partner. Niklas wandered around a bit until he found what he was looking for, he stripped Mulders upper body and treated him right there in the hallway. It wasn't anything serious so he just disinfected, poured a bottle of some experimental medicine that Erik handed him from his little black purse. It was the same liquid he himself had treated Scully with. Mulder stirred, but he didn't regain consciousness. Niklas wrapped Mulder up and put the clothes back on him, except for the Kevlar vest, he handed that one over to Erik who put it on his lap while they waited. Mulder moaned a couple of times in his sleep, but Erik reassured Niklas that it wasn't due to any pain he felt. The liquid worked both as painkiller, disinfection and it increased the speed of the body's natural healing where it was applied.

> "He's dreaming then?" asked Niklas as Mulder moaned again.
 "Most likely, the drugs have one or two sideeffects." said Erik with a smirk and Niklas nodded as he glanced downwards to a *very* noticeable bulge between Mulders legs. Erik pulled the trenchcoat until the bulge was covered by it.

> "I assume that increasing the sexual drift isn't one of them?"
 "He'll be like that for at least four hours." confirmed Erik and chuckled.

> "Shit! Why don't you put this stuff on the market?" asked Niklas. "Four hours?"
 "We're looking for a way to decrease the time it has that effect, walking around with a hardon four hours after taking it might be a little embarrassing. The women also feel very uncomfortable since their sexual drive is increased as well, the first time we tested this shit on human subjects it erupted into a four hour long orgy. The supervisors had a lot of fun, the subjects definitively had fun but it wasn't exactly what we had counted on." said Erik apologetically.

> "A four hour long orgy? Perhaps I should join HawkTech after all!" said Niklas jokingly. He heard the people in the operating room finishing up, so he gave Mulder another little shock. This one not powerful to knock people unconscious, but powerful enough to make him jump out of his seat.

> "Yiaaaa!" exclaimed Mulder and trembled, he blinked and stared around him in confusion until he remembered what he was doing here. "Scully!" he groaned and wrung his hands. He blinked once as he felt something, he looked down and swiftly pulled the trenchcoat around himself. What the devil?/ he wondered, almost beginning to panic as he realized that he was walking around with a unrivalled hardon. He almost feared that his pants would be torn apart, he put all that out of his mind when Scully was rolled out from the operating room. "Doctor? How is she?" he asked when he saw doctor Jean Lombardi. She stopped and took a deep breath.

> "Better then expected, much better in fact. Removing the bullet was a piece of cake, she had been given narcotics before she even arrived even if the paramedics categorically deny that they had anything to do with it. There were a few anomalies in her blood that we're going to take a closer look at, but she's out of danger now. I have no doubts whatsoever that she will make a full recovery." said doctor Lombardi and smiled. "Is she your girlfriend?" Mulder blinked.
 "My...? No, no. We're partners, federal agents." he said slowly. "I have to call her mother!" he exclaimed. "I promised to call again as soon as I heard anything."

> "Here." said someone and Mulder turned around in suprise.
 "Erik? Niklas? When did you arrive?" he asked, stunned to see them there.

> "A while ago. Here." said Erik again and handed him a cell phone. "It's a satellite phone, you can use it in here." he explained.

"We'll keep an eye on her." he said and Mulder was left alone as Erik and Niklas followed the nurses who rolled away Scully. Mulder slumped down into a chair and managed to dial the number to Scully's mother after three tries. He absently pushed his left wrist down on top of the bulge on his trousers, it just wouldn't yield.
 "What the hell is wrong with me?" he said to himself as he waited for Scully's mother to pick up her phone.

>
 "Erik?" said Niklas slowly. "Why is she stirring? Wasn't she supposed to be out cold for at least five hours?" Erik opened his eyes and looked over at Scully.

> "Fuck! This miiiiiiiiiiiiight cause a scene or two..." he admitted and looked around. When Mulder walked into the room, Erik paled as a sheet. Mulder didn't seem to notice thought as he tossed the phone back to Erik, took a chair and seated himself beside her bed, taking her left hand in his two hands. "We have to do something! If they jump each other in here..." he said without going any further. Niklas nodded.
 "They're not going to do it in front of us, are they?" he asked worriedly.

> "I'm not sure, she's injured, perhaps that will calm them down. I wouldn't count on it though. But one thing is certain, we *can't* leave this room!" he hissed in reply. "They'd be in *deep* shit if it came out that the first thing they did when she came out of surgery was to have sex with each other right in the fucking hospital!"
 "Fucking hospital..." said Niklas slowly and couldn't help himself, he smiled broadly. "That brings a whole new image to mind." He slowly schooled his features into a more neutral look, although his eyes sparkled with glee. He realized that and picked out a plastic box from his trenchcoat and put a spare pair of sunglasses on, he didn't need any more problems then he already had.

>
 Mulder relaxed as Scully opened her eyes and looked around her. He noticed that her beautiful eyes still looked slightly glazed and unfocused, there was a slight smile on her gorgeous lips though. He just couldn't take his eyes off her face, she was stunning! The bulge pulsated and he hoped he wasn't blushing, he had the most disturbing images in his head. Images of taking her right then and there, just throw off the covers, tear the hospital gown off and push himself into her, feeling her wrapped around him, bring her to peak after peak, fondle her body, discover every inch of it, make her come as she'd never come before.

> "Hi..." he said weakly, trying to make his voice sound somewhat normal. He bent down to kiss her forehead but somehow missed, kissing her on her lips instead.
 "Shit!" said someone but Mulder didn't really notice.

> "Any suggestions?"
 "Knock him out again?"

> "She might crawl out of bed and take him anyway."
 "Knock both of 'em out?"

> "Might work, lets just hope that they're not sleepwalkers." Mulder was still engrossed in the kiss, exploring her mouth with his tongue as his whole world exploded.

> Niklas frowned as the alarms went off, he swiftly pushed Mulder down in his chair.
 "Perhaps we should have disconnected the electrical equipment." he said as he looked at the smoking gadgets and gizmos Scully had been connected too.

> "No time for that, just look worried. The staff are coming."

> ***

> David Talbot was furious, the tracker in Loubars device had vanished, Duncan had vanished after being at the same place as Loubars tracker. At first, he had thought that Duncan had been captured by Loubar. But when he arrived at the scene and saw the

police surrounding the place he started to suspect that something had gone awry. He soon found out that the police had stormed Loubars hideout, that Loubar had managed to slip away. There wasn't anyone arrested that resembled Duncan in the slightest, none of the prisoners were talking so David had no way of knowing just what had happened. Just to top it all off, one of his Immortal helpers had been killed but Duncan hadn't been in the area. A Quickening had been released though, that meant that there were more Immortals in town. Immortals that David Talbot had no control over. Talbot didn't like it when he wasn't in control. He looked over at his "ally" and frowned, he didn't know his name, the man hadn't even given David an alias. He just thought of him as the Smoking man.

>
 Part 6, The healing process...

>

> Dana Scully briefly opened her eyes and swiftly closed them again, she took a few deep breaths and then opened them again. Much better./ she thought and was glad that the room had stopped spinning. She glanced to her left and saw Mulder slumped in a chair beside her bed, she smiled and let her eyes follow his right arm over to her bed and her own left hand. She saw that she held his hand in a tight grip, she relaxed it a little bit and felt a little guilty as she saw the imprint her hand had left on his. She briefly looked the room over and saw the two phony Agents sitting in a couple of chairs. They both had their eyes closed, breathed deeply and slowly but they didn't really look like they were sleeping. They sat straight and relaxed but Scully saw that both of their heads leaned aside whenever someone walked pass in the corridor outside. They never opened their eyes, but they were definitively aware of things around them. She tentatively scratched the bed she was lying on with her free right hand and both of their heads whipped into an upright position. Erik opened his eyes and she supposed that Niklas did the same behind his ever present sunglasses. Both of them waved at her and mouthed "Do you need anything?" so they wouldn't disturb the sleeping Mulder. She shook her head and formed the words "No, thanks anyway.". They both nodded and Erik closed his eyes, she didn't think Niklas did though. His head sometimes moved over to the door leading out of the room whenever someone walked pass outside, he glanced at the window to the outside but mostly he looked straight ahead, right at her. "How long have I been out?" she mouthed. He stood up and stopped at the foot of her bed.

> "They removed the bullet six hours ago." he whispered and looked at her chart. "It looks good, no lasting damages and you're recovering fast. The doctor expects nothing less then a full recovery and I don't see anything that suggests otherwise." he continued. "So, how long have you and Fox been involved with each other?" he asked and winked at her. She blushed furiously and closed her eyes for a moment.
 "Not at all." He blinked in suprise.

> "Really? From the way he acted..." he fell silent. "Sorry, I just assumed that you were." he apologized.
 "We're not." she said firmly. "Apology accepted, you're not the first to assume that. I've heard the rumors of Mr and Mrs Spooky myself." She chuckled silently.

> "I haven't. I'm just a fake, remember?" he said with a large smile. "Besides, I always judge people from the way they behave, not from what I've heard about them. But I've seen the looks you give each other, you can't deny that there is something between you two."
 "I've most certainly never looked at him that way." she said and hoped that she wasn't blushing as she lied through her teeth. For some reason an image of Mulder kissing her passionately crept into her mind, it felt so got darn real that she would be prepared to

swear that it had been real.

> "Sure... Sure... Whatever." said Niklas and snickered.
 "What happened at the warehouse? I seem to recall you lying in a puddle of your own blood." she asked, trying to divert his attention from the subject. The more she thought about that kiss, the more she wanted to feel how it would be to kiss him in real life. /Stop that! He's your partner, your best friend! Not a pair of lips with legs./ Niklas shrugged.

> "Must have been someone else." he said flippantly. "Loubar managed to escape somehow, both me and Erik left everything for Francis and Mira to handle. We couldn't get to him though and Erik needed to have his wounds taken care of. I haven't heard anything about the situation at the warehouse yet. I thought I'd wait for Mulder to wake up first and then call our friends in the NYPD to see what they have found out so far."
 "You don't need to babysit me." said Dana annoyedly.

> "If something happens to you, Mulder will have my head." replied Niklas and grinned at her. "I'll wait for him to come to, then I'll step outside and make that call."
 "Here, use the sat." said Erik suddenly and tossed what looked like a cell phone towards the bed. Niklas spun around and caught it.

> "Didn't think about that one." admitted Niklas and chuckled. "I'll see what's going on." he said and sat down in his chair again. Scully prepared herself to listen closely but her attention shifted as Bill Scully, her brother suddenly walked into the room. Erik and Niklas was up in a flash and Scully trembled as she somehow sensed the force they represented. Bill apparently sensed it as well because he flinched as he saw them.
 "No, it's all right. He's my brother." said Dana, they shrugged and flowed back in their chairs. Bill slowly moved up to her bed with a nervous look in the direction of the two men. His eyes fell upon Mulder and he frowned at him, at his hand holding Dana in his sleep.

> "Hi sis." he said and sat down on a chair on the other side of the bed. "How are you feeling?"
 "Like I've just been shot." she replied cheerfully. "But they must have given me a darn good painkiller, I actually feel pretty normal. How did you get here? How did you know?"

> "Good to hear." he replied. "I was sent along as a representative to some big meeting the brass had with some guys who are supposed to build a new ship for the navy. Mom called me and told that you were here. What happened?" he asked and took her free hand.
 "We were outside a warehouse where a international terrorist and assassin had set up a temporary hideout. A guy discovered our surveillance equipment so we had to take him out. We called for reinforcements and went in on our own, something happened and we had to prevent the bad guys from escaping. I don't really know what happened to me, Mulder tackled me aside but it was to late from preventing a bullet from hitting me."

> "It was Victor Loubar." said Mulder suddenly as he opened his eyes. "He crawled up onto the platform and aimed for you, I tried to shove you out of the way but he managed to shoot before you were completely out of the way." Scully whipped her head around just in time to see Mulders head snap back as he saw Bill on the other side of the bed.
 "You again... Putting my sisters life in danger. Are you trying to get her killed?" asked Bill and got up. Dana reached out her hand to grab a hold of him, but he had already went out of her reach. He walked around the bed, grabbed Mulders trenchcoat and slammed him up against the wall.

> "Mulder! Bill, stop it!!" yelled Dana as Mulder groaned in pain as his head hit the wall with a thud. Bills eyes suddenly became wide

open, he dropped Mulder who sunk into a pile on the floor. Erik held one hand on Bills left shoulder, Dana saw Bills face twisted in pain. His mouth was open but he was unable to scream. Erik spun him around, grabbed him by the throat with his right hand and hoisted him up into the air. Dana just stared as Erik pushed Bill against the wall.
 "He *saved* her life you bloody jackass!" snarled Erik and then let Bill down onto the floor again.

> "If it wasn't for him, her life wouldn't have been in danger in the first place!" snapped Bill and his right fist shot out at Eriks face, his left arm hanging uselessly straight down. Erik moved aside and grabbed Bills fist as it passed his head.
 "Be that as it may, she is wounded, Mulder is wounded and I don't think either of them needs you to make things worse. If you are going to stay in here, stay calm or I will break every fucking bone in both your arms before I throw you out of here." Bill who had sunk down on his knees nodded vigorously, sweat pouring from him. Erik shoved him over to the other side of her bed before he bent down to check on Mulder. "Damn, the wound has opened again." he swore as he saw the blood seeping through Mulders shirt. He moved him up into the chair, pulled out a wad of gauze from one of his pockets and replaced the old one. When he got up, Dana saw that he was bleeding himself.

> "You're bleeding." she commented and pointed at his white shirt, it now had a bloody patch at his right shoulder. He looked at it and shook his head.
 "I may just break your arms even if you do stay calm." he snapped in Bills direction and stripped off his shirt. Niklas came over and started to replace the bloody things with new ones with the telephone pressed to his left ear with the aid of his shoulder. He was listening to someone in the other end, occasionally asking or answering things.

> "Who are these guys?" whispered Bill in Scullys ear.
 "Agents Jim and Tom Olsen of the FBI." replied Niklas calmly and Scully blinked. /How in gods name could he have heard that from where he was standing?/ she wondered. "No, I wasn't talking to you." he said into the telephone. "Where we are? Room 372. ... Yeah, we'll be here a while longer. A troublemaker has showed up, he assaulted Agent Mulder. ... No, he's Agent Scullys brother, I don't think she would want him arrested." he looked at her. "Do you want to place your brother under arrest? Mira wants to know." Scully looked at Bill and actually considered it before she turned her head toward Niklas.

> "Nah, but let's keep that in mind just in case he goes out of line." she said and winked at him. He nodded and finished rewrapping Erik.
 "Naw, but don't give up yet. She might change her mind." he said into the phone. "Yeah all right, see ya." he said and handed Erik the telephone. "Get some rest you silly bugger." he said fondly and Erik nodded, he sat down into the chair and closed his eyes again. Niklas sat down in another chair and looked at Bill. "I'll keep his promise for him if you cause any more trouble." said Niklas and leaned back in his chair.

>

>
 "Miz Frost, they're like not here." said Jubilee. "B'sides, why're we trackin' 'em?" she asked and looked at the impressive figure of Emma Frost.

> "Because the X-men have other things to worry about." she replied coldly.
 "Meanin' that ya haven't told 'em that we're trackin' him?" she asked and regretted it instantly as Emma turned around to stare at her. Jubilee felt like she shrunk until she was the size of a mouse whenever Emma looked at her like that, she refused to let any of it show on the outside though and she kept her mental shields firmly in place. Emma nodded calmly.

> "They don't know." she admitted. "You are learning child, when we

get back, I expect you to have an explanation why I didn't tell them. Now keep looking Jubilation, there must be something here that we can use to find them."
 "Well, we do know the names of the others stayin' here, we can start by lookin' for them." said Jubilee and flipped through the pages of a book.

> "We do?" asked Emma and temporarily let her surprise show. Jubilee looked at her in confusion. "Yeah. Didn't ya see the nametags on the suitcases? Dana Scully, Fox Mulder, Angie Ramirez'n Rollie Tyler. There's two others except Niklas'n Erik, but neither of those four had the nametag things on their bags."
 "And you didn't tell me this because???"

> "Thought it was so obvious that I didn't think ya'd overlook it Frosty." smirked Jubilee, pleased with herself. Emma raised an eyebrow at her and then shrugged, obviously not in the mood to argue at the moment. She didn't even complain about the use of 'Frosty', Perhaps she's sick./

> "No I'm not." she said. "Keep looking." she ordered and picked up the telephone.

> ***

> Victor Loubar relaxed as he curled up among the luggage in the airplane, things had really gotten out of hand here. He didn't care if he hadn't accomplished his mission or not. He briefly wondered when he had gotten so sloppy that the police had been able to find him. That disaster at the warehouse had been something he never would have expected. He only had himself to blame though, he had planned both the attack on Duncan MacLeod and Rollie Tyler, he should have concentrated on one of them before he went after the other. So now he would have to call in a favor and hope for the best, the plane he was sitting on was headed for the Middle East. With a little luck, Victor would be able to get into Iraq and find some way to get a message to Saddam Hussein. The man owed Victor a lot, now he'd get a chance to return the favor. If he refused? Well, Victor had something left to bargain with. He patted his packback and smiled, he was certain that Saddam would be ready to pay quite a lot for a functioning Neutron bomb. It was only a small one, but if it was used correctly, it would be able to depopulate a large area. If it was detonated outside the White house, it would take out about half of Washington DC.

> ***

> "Why are we being held prisoners?" asked Connor without getting an answer. The figure just set the table, looked at them from behind the anonymity of his black hood and then left the room. A few seconds after that, the magnet in the floor was turned off. Conner sighed in relief as the iron wristbands he had been equipped with stopped holding him in place. Both he and Methos got up and sat down at the table. The food was good and they got plenty of it, they were given a menu every day, they got to choose what they would eat and drink for every meal. They had a shared room and two separate bedrooms, nothing too fancy but not to Spartan. They had a TV, a VCR and if they wanted something to read, they only had to ask for it. The bathroom was large and cleaned on a daily basis, the servants never said anything. They just did their chores and left. There wasn't any windows so they couldn't guess where they were being kept, no sound got through the walls so they couldn't hear any sounds either. They still had their swords and everything they had been wearing, their clothes were washed at night when they slept. All in all, they were being treated much better then in any other prison Connor even had been. But it unnerved him that they weren't being interrogated by anyone. He had expected it ever since they were brought here, but the constant waiting was driving him crazy.
 "ello guys." Connors head swung around and he stared suspiciously at the figure standing in the

doorway, closing the door behind him. "I trust that you've been treated well?" he queried. Connor recognized him as one of the guys that had been in the car, he was a dead ringer for the other one, the one Connor had fought before he was shot in the back, probably by this fellow.

> "You." snarled Methos and Connor nodded, that only confirmed his suspicions. Methos had probably seen him before he was 'killed' by this guys shotgun.
 "The same. I do apologize for not being able to meet up with you before, but I've been tied up at a hospital, visiting a friend." he explained. He walked up to the table where they were sitting and looked at their meal. "Looks good, at least I won't have to yell at anyone for not cooking properly."

> "Why are we being held here?" asked Connor and wondered if he should try and attack this fool of a man, the magnet hadn't been turned on. They both had full freedom of movement and their swords were lying on the floor, Connor could almost reach his without getting up.
 "Well, you both said that you are here to help Duncan. You know him." he said and pointed at Methos. "You might, but I don't know for sure." he said and looked Connor in the eyes. "I don't want to risk anything, your stupid 'game' has made good friends turn against each other in the past. For now, I won't allow any more Immortals run around town chopping heads off. I can't just let Duncan get away either, the police and the feds knows what he looks like. I'll think of something. But until I've gotten him away from this mess, you'll stay here as honored guests."

> "Prisoners." spat Methos with disgust.
 "If you wish to look at it that way." said the strange fellow and nodded.

> "Who are you?" asked Connor and stared him in the eyes.
 "Erik, Erik Jonsson." he replied without hesitation. "But if any of you breathes as much as a whisper my name in the future, I'll put you and all other Immortals in the spotlight. You'll make front-page news, you'll end up in talkshows, Immortals all over the world will be identified and their phony identities made public knowledge."

> "We could kill your right now." said Connor slowly.
 "Perhaps." replied Erik. "Perhaps not. I wouldn't bet on it."

> "Why are you helping Duncan?" asked Methos.
 "Even if I choose to ignore it sometimes, I do have a sense of fair play. Turning him into a hunted animal, sending every fucking gun for hire in town to chase him down, sending hordes of Immortals in his path... It's not fair play, because of that, he has earned my help to even things out a little."

> "That's what we came here for, even things out, help him. Let us!" ordered Connor.
 "Sorry, I just don't have enough information on you two. Don't worry, he'll soon be another honored guest here. I'll ask him if you guys can be trusted, if you can... Well, I don't intend to pay food and lodging for you two the rest of your lives. If you can't be trusted, well, I guess Duncan can use the power he could gain from taking another head or two."

>

>
 "Agent Mulder?" Mulder turned around and looked at the doctor that treated Scully.

> "Yeah doc?" he replied, a questioning note in his voice. "There hasn't been any complications, has there?" he queried worriedly.
 "No, nothing like that." she said calmly. "The analyze of the strange substances in Agent Scullys blood is finished. I showed it to our research division and they got pretty exited about it, what we found in her blood was a strange mixture of various substances. Some of them are found in many conventional drugs and medicines, some of them were thought to be harmful and even lethal, others we haven't managed to identify yet. But I think that it is the reason why she seems to

be healing at a very swift rate. We gave her some painkillers, she broke them down in one hour instead of five. That rate has lessened during the time since she was admitted, but her immune system and natural healing are still working faster then they should. Then there's her Cancer..."

> "What about it?" asked Mulder with a lump in his throat. Oh please don't let it have gone out of remission, I couldn't bear to go on living without her, please don't let it be that!/"

> "Nothing to worry about, it appears as if it has regressed even more. I won't go so far as to say that she's out of danger, but... We don't have any way to explain it. In her system was more then enough Cobra venom to kill a healthy adult, she shouldn't have survived long in her condition. But not only did she survive, she healed faster then humanly possible!"
 "Cobra venom?"

> "I know that it sounds crazy, but that's what we found. What is even more strange is that I was called in to the director of this hospital earlier today. He ordered me to leave this out of my report, how he found out is beyond me. But he knew, he knew exactly what was in her system and he knew it long before the researchers did. I'm not sure why I told you this, but I think that you should know." she said and looked at her feet for a moment before she looked up. "It's... this isn't the first time either, there have been other times when I have been ordered to keep silent about things that doesn't make any sense, not report gunshot wounds to the police, treat patients without putting it down into a chart. My brother is a nurse in Boston, I told him once and he said they sometimes had to do the same things."
 "Hey doctor, the chief want's to see you right away." said a nurse that tapped the good doctor on her shoulder. She nodded.

> "Excuse me, I'll just see what he wants." Mulder waited for 15 minutes before he decided to return to his partners side, the doctor obviously had other things to do.

> "Cobra venom? Mulder, they obviously made a mistake." said Dana Scully and closed her eyes.
 "No, they didn't." said Erik as he looked through a pile of papers that a young policewoman had delivered to him just after Mira, Francis, Angie and Rollie arrived. They hadn't known each other for very long, but Dana really liked them all and got the feeling that they liked her and Mulder as well.

> "What would you know?" asked Francis suspiciously. Dana had a feeling that no one really knew what to think of the two cousins. They all knew that they weren't really FBI agents, that they were both civilians that shouldn't be involved in this. But for some reason, none of them had revealed their real identities to anyone. They never left for long, apparently having taken upon themselves to act as bodyguards for her and Mulder. Erik sometimes left for a few hours, but Niklas seemed to be around constantly. Sometimes sitting in the chair, sometimes pacing around in the corridor outside and once she could have sworn that she saw him crawl through the ventilation duct that passed her room. She sighed, it would be great to get out of here. The new doctor had told her that she would be released soon if nothing out of the ordinary happened.
 "Quite a lot actually. One of the many things I know is that Cobra venom wasn't the only toxic substance in her blood. The reason why I know this is because I was a part of the team that created the stuff she was treated with." he said calmly and gasped as he looked at a new paper. "Holy fucking shit!" he exclaimed.

> "What?" asked Angie and walked over to look at the paper he was staring at.
 "What is that you're looking at?" asked Mulder suspiciously.

> "I am looking at some of the shit found in Loubars warehouse, the paper I'm currently looking at is a blueprint for a Neutron bomb. That would explain the radiation. But the place was literally torn apart looking for the source of the radiation, it wasn't there anymore. Someone moved it from the warehouse, if they finished this bomb, we're in deep shit."
 "How deep?" asked Dana and looked at Mulder.

> "It could take out half of New York. Then again, they could have built several..."
 "It's not that big..." said Niklas thoughtfully. "Mulder, did you notice that backpack Loubar was wearing?" he asked and stared at the blueprints over Eriks shoulder.

> "Yeah, now that you mention it." replied Mulder.
 "He could have been carrying it in his backpack. Since I don't think he would risk carrying an incomplete Neutron bomb on his back, I guess it's safe to assume that at least one was finished and that Loubar now has got a bomb that could take out half of New York City."

> "Damn! You haven't been able to find *any* clues of his whereabouts?" asked Rollie and punched the wall in frustration.
 "None whatsoever." replied Mira and sighed. "Do you think we should evacuate the city?"

> "Millions of people, where would they go?" asked Mulder in defeat. "It would turn into a stampede, people would panic, mass destruction, looting, people trampled to death. We don't even know if he's still in town or if he even plans to use it himself."
 "I've got people searching for him as well, he was spotted but managed to shake his tail within a few minutes." revealed Erik and sighed. "No clues, no traces, no anything."

> "I asked our AD to call us if the FBI found anything out, haven't heard anything yet." revealed Mulder tiredly. Scully saw how he looked at her out of the corner of his eye, she knew how he felt. He didn't want this, he wanted to be alone with her.
 "All right, the two lovebirds here obviously want some privacy, move your asses out into the corridor." said Erik suddenly and winked at the two of them. All of them wished her a swift recovery before they walked outside, Angie and Rollie made thumbs up at them and shared a smile between themselves before they left the room and closed the doors behind them.

> "This is beginning to grate on my nerves, everybody seems to think that we're a couple." said Mulder, half serious, half jokingly. Dana gave him half a smile and looked into his hazel eyes. She saw hordes of emotions there, guilt, love, hate, worry, curiosity and something she didn't recognize, could it be... regret? She didn't know and she was too tired to think about it.
 "C'mere Mulder, I need a hug." she admitted and smiled weakly at him. He chuckled silently for a second before his arms slipped around her and hugged her close. She sighed, she never felt as safe as when he held her. Holding hands wasn't enough for the moment, she needed the hug, needed to feel his body next to hers. She closed her eyes and enjoyed the feeling of his chest against her cheek, hearing his heart beat almost right at her right ear.

>
 Mulder smiled as he heard Scullys breath slow down, deepen and he smirked as he heard a soft snore from his petite partner. He held her a few minutes longer and then gently leaned her back into the bed. He kissed her forehead and sat back in his chair, he looked at her sleeping for almost an hour before he leaned back in his chair and fell asleep himself.

>

>
 Duncan groaned loudly as he woke up, his head still hurt like hell. /Still?/ he wondered briefly and tried to remember what had

happened. He thought back and remembered that he had been sitting on his bed back at the hotel, pleased that nobody had disturbed his sleep, thinking that the device might actually work. When he had learned that he was carrying a tracker, he had searched through his clothes, washed himself from top to bottom without finding anything even remotely suspicious. He had heard his door open and reached for his sword, he spun around with the sword in his hands just to stare into the barrel of a gun with a silencer. He remembered seeing the gun being fired in his face and then nothing. He sat up in the bed and looked around himself, this definitively wasn't the hotel he had stayed at. It was beautifully furnished, but there wasn't any windows and the only way out appeared to be a stout metal door. It was beautiful, but there wasn't any mistaking it for what it really was, a prison. He had been 'killed' and brought to a prison. Someone had known enough about him to know that he wouldn't die by a bullet in his head, someone had killed him and moved him here, knowing that his injury wasn't fatal. His sword rested on a nightstand beside the bed, his clothes had been washed and were folded neatly on a chair, his wallet and other personal affects laid beside them. /Not your average prison, but a prison still... One where they know about Immortals./ Duncan didn't want to admit it, but he was deeply worried. The one who had taken him prisoner could be Hunters or perhaps something even worse than Hunters. There was food on a table, a bottle of wine as well as a bottle of Whiskey. He shrugged, it didn't look as if they were going to kill him right away, he might as well spend his time preparing himself for possible future ordeals.

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>
 "What is this place?" asked a voice. "There are so much *hurt* here..." it never did finish the sentence, but it was quite clear that the voice thought that 'hurt' was a *very* bad thing.

> "I... I don't know! Death... Fear... Pain... So much... So much... Too much!" the second voice was just as subdued as the first, but somehow it managed to make it seem like every single word was spoken with a following exclamation mark.
 "It's a hospital... Humans are brought here to become well... or to die..." said a third voice, a voice heavy with knowledge that somehow managed to make the tingling, sparkling, young voice sound as if it came from someone with thousands of years of bitter experience behind it. As a matter of fact, it did...

>
 Niklas felt it, he felt the presence of earthly magic so clear that it almost hurt. He looked around in all directions without finding the source, it pounded on his awareness, it seeped through every cell in his body, he *knew* that there was a source of immense magic close to him. The only time he had felt something like this before was whenever he had been absent from the fairies for a long period of time and then... He looked around again, this time paying close attention to the shadows in the room. He stared silently at three shadows, shadows showing what looked like three flying female forms with wings and long hair.

> "Hi girls." he whispered silently, not wanting to make the others wake up. Even Erik had fallen asleep all the way instead of hovering somewhere between sleep and alertness. "What are you doing here?" he asked and directed his attention towards where he guessed they were. They slowly faded out of invisibility and became visible to the naked eye. They weren't as large as ordinary humans anymore, apparently they had decided to return to their natural size again. They were wearing skirts instead of their loincloths though, he assumed that they had shrunk some of the clothes he had bought for them when they decided to become as large as the humans around them.
 "Hi. Why did you leave?" asked Cipi, the golden-haired leader of the trio.

> "Hiya! Who are all these humans?!" asked Sipi, the innocent little bundle of excitement.
 "Hello. You look awful in those clothes." said Tipi, the curmudgeon of the trio.

> "I left because I had something to do. The humans are my friends. You however look kinda cute Tipi. You all do." replied Niklas who knew that they were suckers for flattery. "I don't suppose I could persuade you all to return to the mansion?" he asked hopefully.
 "No way."

> "F'get it!"
 "No flonqin' way. Oath!" Niklas stared suspiciously at Tipi.

> "Cable back at the mansion?" he queried curiously.
 "Do you want a taste of this?" she retorted and held up her fist at him.

> "He's back..." he sighed and smiled as he looked at the little fairy. If she stood on his groin, she still wouldn't be tall enough to look him in the eyes without leaning her head back. He could break every bone in her body without really trying, he could kill her with one hand. But she looked very threatening in his eyes. Of course, that may have something to do with the fact that she possesses so much raw magic power that she could rip this whole hospital apart if she knew a spell for that purpose./ he thought. /On the other hand, there's no telling how much they could have learned in their long lives, perhaps she do know a spell that could accomplish that./ "Well, you can't stay here at the hospital at least. You'd cause a lot of strokes if you did. I think I'd better take you three to the hotel... *Shit* ... and explain the existence of fairies to two special effects wizards and two New York police officers. Ugh! Are you sure that you'd not rather be at the mansion?" They all shook their heads and he relented, he elbowed Erik who opened his eyes at once. "Mornin', you'll have to stay alert for a while. I'm leaving three little 'guests' at the hotel." he said and pointed at the fairies. Erik stared at them for a while and nodded.

> "You will explain them when you get back, won't you?" he asked curiously and slightly suspiciously.
 "Yeahyeah." replied Niklas and shifted into Illyana, he and the fairies vanished into the stepping disc, ended up in the blackness of Limbo and came out in his room back at the hotel. He shifted back into his own body and took in everything around him. It was only seven in the morning, but he heard everyone moving around. "Well, at least we don't have to wake anyone up." he said and walked out into the joint room. Four suprised faces stared over at him and became even more suprised as the three fairies followed him into the room.

> "Gack!" said Rollie as he choked on something he was eating.
 "Pffffft!" Angie showered a stream of tea over the table.

> "Dios!" exclaimed Palmira in suprise. Francis who had been sleeping at home and just arrived was a little more awake then the rest of them, it didn't help though.
 "Christ!" he said and his mouth remained open.

> "Guys, I'd like you to meet a couple of my friends." said Niklas and pointed at the fairies over his shoulder. "Rollie, Angie, Mira, Francis. This is Cipi, Sipi and Tipi. I didn't think they'd be so popular at the hospital, so I thought you might be willing to keep an eye on them for a while?"
 "Hiya humans." said Cipi cheerfully and smiled widely at the stunned humans at the table.

> "Pleased t'meetcha!" exclaimed Sipi and Niklas was once again reminded of how much she sounded like a child on Speed.
 "Hi." said Tipi as she stared suspiciously at the four humans.

> "Behave now, you hear?" he warned the fairies, leaving them without his supervision was always a bad idea, but not as bad as having them hovering around in the hospital. There was no telling what they might come up with in a crowded hospital. "No magic unless it's in self

defense, no shooting my friends with your magic arrows and stay in here. If you're bored, sing to my friends or something." said Niklas, desperately trying to think of something that might keep them occupied in his absence. In the end he just looked at the others.

"Will you keep an eye at them, keep them out of trouble for me?" he asked beggingly. Rollie and Angie absently nodded and after a while, so did Mira and Francis. He smiled gratefully, somehow he doubted that anyone of them would leave the hotel for quite a while, hopefully managing to keep the fairies out of trouble. "Thanks guys, I'll be back as soon as Agent Scully is out of the hospital." He walked out through the front door, changed into Illyana and was just about to summon up a stepping disc when he heard something through the door.
 +crash+

> He didn't even bother to find out what the fairies had broken, he just brought up the disc and stepped into it.

>
 Part 7, Reluctant allies...

>

> "How in gods name did you arrange this?" asked Dana Scully as she was rolled out from the hospital in a wheelchair being pushed forward by her partner and best friend, Fox Mulder.
 "Trick of the trade." replied Erik. "Besides, with you out of the hospital and away from the supervision of the pencilpushing researchers there, we can get you back on your feet in no-time."

> "You mentioned that before, would you care to elaborate a little on that?" asked Mulder over her shoulder. "You two have claimed to have her 'healed' in less time then we are able to imagine, I'd for one would sure like to know how you plan to manage that?"
 "You two have seen a lot of strange things, well, you'll soon come face to face with a few more." said Niklas and chuckled silently. "One of the first is the mode of transportation I thought we were going to use today. Erik and I talked it over and came to the conclusion that nobody would take your claims seriously anyway, so we might just as well skip the charade and do things the best possible way." said Niklas and opened the door to the back of a black van standing outside the hospital. "Erik, if you would..." he murmured and Scully paled as her wheelchair suddenly was hoisted up into the air and floated into the van. They all stepped inside and Scully stared with her eyes wide open as Niklas suddenly turned into someone completely different. His hair grew, his features changed and his clothes morphed as well. A few seconds later, it wasn't him standing there in front of them. It was a beautiful young girl with long blonde hair, tight fitting black clothes and a sword in a sheath on her back. She didn't look very old, seventeen years or so, not much older then that. But her eyes, Scully wasn't sure if she ever had seen eyes that cold. Eriks eyes sometimes had that same look in them, but most of the time his also seemed to contain at least a glimmer of something else, something brighter.

> "We're going back to the hotel." she said and winked at them.

Scully gasped as a bluish-white shimmering disc appeared in the roof over them, it slowly descended and Scully closed her eyes in panic. When she opened them again, she instantly regretted it. They were all standing on nothing, everything around them was a huge black nothingness that stretched into infinity.
 "Where are we?" asked Mulder in a subdued voice.

> "This used to be Limbo, a demonic dimension that was recently destroyed along with all the demons that used to live here. Now, it's nothing more then a quick stop along the way to our hotel." replied the girl that only a few moments ago had been Niklas. Another disc appeared, this time underneath their feet. It swiftly rose and when it had passed, Scully suddenly found herself with everyone else in a

room back at the hotel. The girl swiftly morphed back into Niklas again and he smiled at her and Mulder behind her, she could hear Mulder making strangling noises, as if he was choking on something.
 "Well, shall we?" he asked and opened the door. She heard gasps on the other side and confused queries as how he had arrived into his room without being noticed. As Mulder took her out in her wheelchair, she was received by seven staring faces. /Seven?/ She looked again. Rollie, Angie, Mira, Francis... Three fairies... /Fairies!/
> "Jesus Scully..." mumbled Mulder behind her. "Are you seeing what I am seeing?" he asked in a subdued voice. "Because if you aren't, I'm checking into the closest mental asylum at once."
 "Agents, these are three of my friends. Cipi, Sipi and Tipi." said Niklas and held out his right arm. Scully stared in wonder as the fairies landed on it, seated themselves and joined arms with graceful motions. Niklas smiled at them and then walked them over closer to her and Mulder.

> "Are... What... Fairies?" squeaked Mulder as he looked at them.
 "The other four reacted much better than you did." said the one Niklas had introduced as Cipi.

> "Yeah, you should close your mouth human, it's not polite to drool and stare like that!" exclaimed the one called Sipi cheerfully.
 "What did you expect from a human, he's probably considering how to kill us right now." grunted the last one, Tipi.

> "Ahhh, it's great to have you three back. I've even missed you Tipi!" said Niklas and kissed the top of each little head. Scully forced herself to view them in a detached clinical way, her whole manner changed until she was the 'Ice Queen' in every inch of her body. All three of them were about 25-30 centimeters tall, they were definitively women, she wasn't sure if she ever had seen a female body so obviously perfect in every aspect. It wasn't as if she were consciously looking at other women, but she noticed, unconsciously wondering if Mulder would like them or not. They all had long curly hair, golden blonde, sparkling silver and charcoal black perfect hair. Their eyes had been catshaped, their ears had pointy tips and she was quite certain that their skin really looked like that, they weren't wearing any makeup whatsoever. Dana knew that any woman would kill for looks like that, hell, *she* would kill for their looks. They were wearing forest green skirts and nothing else in the way of clothes. Topless, bare feet, leather belt with a small sword, a bag with arrows and small bow tucked into it. They had wings, perhaps 35-40 centimeters long wings that reminded her of insect wings. Transparent, a slightly greenish tinge with grayish 'veins' running in seemingly random patterns all over them.
 +beep+

> Dana jumped as Mulder's cell phone rang, he pulled it out of his pocket and walked into his bedroom to answer the call. She returned her attention to the fairies and noticed that they were looking at her as well.
 "Well, I would have thought that you and Mulder would be able to handle this *much* better than just staring with your mouths hanging open. Our special effects wizards and NYPD officers reacted a little better after the first initial shock." said Niklas with a big grin. "After all, you've both seen a lot of strange things before."

> "Scully, could you come in here for a few seconds?" asked Mulder suddenly and opened the door to his bedroom. "I promise, I'll be the perfect gentleman." he quipped with a sparkle in his eyes.
 "I've shot you before Mulder, try anything funny and I'll happily do it again." she shot back and he chuckled as he rolled her into the room and closed the door behind them. He turned on the clock-radio beside his bed and pointed at a portable fax that was spitting out papers in

a seemingly never-ending stream.

> "The information from Frohike arrived. The gunmen checked out both Erik, Niklas and HawkTech. On the surface, it all seems strictly legit. All taxes paid, all permits in order, nothing even remotely suspicious anywhere and HawkTech donates enormous amounts of money to all sorts of charity all over the world. They operate homeless shelters, they are secretly running at least fifty medicinal research centers that offers free treatment to victims of Cancer and HIVAIDS. At a casual look, it seems like HawkTech is centered around computers, hardware and software, they manufacture, research, develop, distribute, sell. HawkTech controls everything from the computers manufactured to the programs running on them. However, HawkTech also owns a large portion of other companies, small businesses, bars, restaurants and god knows what else. Several of those companies obviously serves no other purpose then owning a *lot* of other companies, stocks, bonds and whatever. High ranking HawkTech employees are often seen in the company of Senators, congressmen, governors and even the President. Erik himself have visited the White house on at least five different occasions when he has met with the President behind closed doors. HawkTech operates in China, one week they were completely forbidden to trade, the next, the Chinese army started to pounce on software pirates pirating HawkTech software, in the end of the week, every Chinese city had a HawkTech store selling everything from software to western clothes, forbidden books and other things previously banned in China."

> "How did they manage that?" asked Scully faintly as she studied one of the papers the fax had printed for them. "Look at this! They have tracked Eriks passport, he has hardly spent more then a week in the same place without going somewhere."
 "Nobody knows, somehow they must have gained the aid of the Communists in China almost overnight." replied Mulder. "Why did they send this?" he asked out loud as he looked at a paper.

> "What is it?" she queried, still looking over Eriks extensive travels.
 "Unsolved murders, murders supposedly committed by Le Mat. Dates and locations..."

> "Gimme that." ordered Scully and started comparing. Holy.../ "Fuck!" she exclaimed and blushed furiously. Mulder raised an eyebrow and looked at her in suprise. "Don't even think about opening your mouth Mulder..." she warned him and tried to get her blush under control. "Erik was in the area during the time of at least a quarter of these murders." she said and Mulder lost the amused grin he had been flashing at her and looked over her shoulder as she compared Eriks travels with the murders.

> "You're right..." he said. "How did they manage to make this connection?" he asked absently.
 "They're almost as crazy as you are Mulder, your intuition must have rubbed off on them." He grinned at her as he started to leaf through the other papers still pouring out of the fax.

> "Both HawkTech and Erik himself are under investigation by the FBI, NSA, CIA, Secret Service, Navy Intelligence, Army Intelligence, Interpol, IRS, Economic crimes... The list just goes on! He is supposedly wanted for murder in Sweden, but nobody in Sweden wants him to take the stand for some reason. He has been called in for questioning on several occasions, he has prevented three rapes, two robberies and five armed assaults earlier this year alone."
 "You two really are a couple of hopeless busybodies." said Erik and sighed. Scully spun around to see him standing in the doorway. Neither of them had noticed that he had slipped inside and heard what they were saying. "Just make sure that this information doesn't leave this room instact. You won't be able to convince anyone that it is

correct anyway. It's being taken care of even as we speak. By the way, the next time you see Byers, tell him I'm very disappointed. I might just have to consider lowering his salary." said Erik and slipped outside. Dana looked at Mulder who stared with very wide eyes at the closed door. Dana took a deep breath and looked at the pile of papers she held in her hands.

> "Anything about Niklas?" she queried.
 "Not much. Swedish citizen, arrested once for 'Disorderly behavior', a nice way of saying that he was drunk and took a bath in a public fountain. Was excused from joining the army due to his poor physical condition. Founded and owns HawkSoft Europe. It used to be called '2 much' before he teamed up with his cousin and HawkTech. Under investigation by the Swedish security police, they've monitored the Swedish libraries and found his taste in books disturbing enough to keep an eye on him. Owns a lot of small businesses all over the world. Donates a lot of money to charity, member of Amnesty, has spent millions of dollars buying land in Africa, South America and Asia where animals are supposed to live without having to fear hunters or human involvement. Poachers and even legal hunters have a tendency to end up seriously injured or dead after trying to hunt on his lands. He is regarded as the worlds leading authority when it comes to computer security and Cryptology, The Lone Gunmen claims to use his software for protection. His 'Fucking Great Privacy' is apparently the best Encryption available for free. His 'Total Integrity' is not free, but it's the only Commercial Encryption available that's better than FGP."

> "'Poor physical condition'?" asked Scully in disbelief, wondering what the Swedish army considered good physical condition.
 "This is interesting, there's a picture of him here, taken three months ago." said Mulder and showed Scully a picture of him. "Does this look like the man in the room out there?" he asked as Scully looked at the picture.

> "The nose, the forehead, the haircut... But he must have lost 30 kilograms or more in that time. He is supposed to need glasses as well, this says that he's nearsighted." replied Dana.
 "He could be wearing lenses you know, Erik does."

> "Perhaps. But why the sunglasses? This paper also said that he was tested for the X-factor once and revealed as a latent Mutant. Since he didn't have any active powers, nobody said anything to him. The nature of his latent powers was never discovered."
 "At the warehouse... His eyes were glowing red, just like Eriks does sometimes." revealed Mulder.

> "Something obviously brought his latent powers out in the open, that might be responsible for his sudden transformation."
 "You might be right Scully, but where did he learn to handle weapons? At the warehouse he turned a guy into mincemeat without hesitation. When you were shot, he seemed sure enough of what he was doing, almost as if he had paramedic training. There is absolutely nothing here, he has taken cooking lessons, he has taken evening classes in Massage and a few lessons in formal dancing. A day training CPR and then it's just about it."

> "Perhaps he's a natural Mulder?" she suggested.
 "Nobody is so natural that they can tear someone apart without hesitation. Do you remember that shot he made from the van Scully? He jumped out, brought the rifle up and tft! He hardly even aimed, he just brought it up and the next thing we know, the guy got his brains blown out."

> "That is one of the things that disturbs me too, where and *why* did the two of them learn all this? There has to be a reason for learning how to kill with such apparent ease, there has to be a

reason for getting spies into the FBI, there has to be a reason why they are here in person, going after Loubar or whatever they are doing."

"Yeah. Back at the warehouse, when you were down... A man in a black trenchcoat was crouched down beside you when I got back. I pushed him away, he and Niklas had a little conversation. When he left, I got a look at him. It was the guy on the police scetch, the guy from the books Scully! It was really him, Niklas called him MacLeod or Duncan. Our mysterious decapitator is a man called Duncan MacLeod and Niklas apparently knows who he is." said Mulder and sighed. "I wish we knew what was really going on here."

> "Perhaps we should ask Erik and Niklas? They might answer some questions, as long as it's not about the X-men or Eriks contacts." suggested Scully and Mulder nodded in agreement.

> "You want to know where I learned how to handle a gun?" asked Niklas, pondered about it and then shrugged his shoulders. "Why not? When my mutant powers first manifested, I had no control over any of them. One of them was to copy the skills, talents, memories and powers of everyone around me. It worked better with Mutants then ordinary humans though, aliens worked pretty good as well even if they didn't have powers as such. How to handle weapons is one of the things I still have got up in my head from that time." he replied. "I also have knowledge in various languages, medicinal skills, a certain knack for unarmed combat, juggling, drawing and god knows what else. Most of what I did copy back then is gone though, it was cleared from my mind." said Niklas and shivered at the memory of that particular event. "But perhaps that was for the best, I nearly lost my mind for a while when thoughts and impulses from some of the people I had copied almost managed to take control."

"You make it sound as if it happened a long time ago, I thought your powers only recently became active?" asked Dana Scully and Niklas looked curiously at her. /What and how does she know?/* /They got a horde of information about you and me from a bunch of nerds called 'The Lone Gunmen', do you know them?/* asked Erik mentally. /I've heard of them. How come?/* he thought and focused to bring his thoughts to the surface of his mind. Erik wasn't much of a telepath so if Niklas didn't make it easier for him, mental communication would be almost impossible. */One of them are involved in a minor HawkTech project. I don't think he knows anything about HawkTech, but he does have access to some sensitive databases. He has obviously used them to find information about you, me and HawkTech, not knowing that he used HawkTech resources to do this./* transmitted Erik.

> "Agent Scully, do you believe in time travel?" he asked and smirked at her. Mulder looked more interested, but Scully leaned back in her chair and focused a disbelieving look at him. God I love to tick people off!/ he thought in contentment. He really did, it was fun to get people going.

> "No I don't." she replied stiffly.
"So if I said that I'm 'me' from a couple of months into the future, you wouldn't believe me?" he asked calmly.

> "No I probably wouldn't."
"Then I guess that there isn't any point in telling you that I am?" He chuckled and smiled, his big grin being directed mostly at Agent Mulder.

> "Why don't you tell me anyway?" she asked.
"I've never tried *that* approach before, perhaps I should be taking notes..." murmured Mulder and grinned at his petite partner. She playfully punched his left shoulder and he made a face at her.

> "Well, here goes." said Niklas and looked up at the roof. "The X-men ended up in another world, another dimension. Some shit happened and finally, we were sent back. I don't know what happened to the others, but I didn't return to the time or place where we

first entered that world. I ended up on an airplane, dressed in medieval clothes and with a sword at my side. But that wasn't the worst part, that honor goes to the fact that I had returned to our world, but our world several months before I left it. I rejoined the X-men and here I am, impersonating an FBI agent."
 "What if you brought along some mysterious virus or bacteria from that world, you could be a carrier for something that would make the Black Plague seem harmless!" exclaimed Scully.

> "I thought you didn't believe in Time travel Agent Scully?" he joked. "I have been examined from head to toe and even if I did catch something there, it wouldn't have stayed in my body for very long. I'm a pretty fast healer, my immune system would have taken care of anything out of the ordinary."
 "This is amazing, even if you're just lying. I'm going to write my own movie script." said Rollie suddenly and Niklas looked calmly at him.

> "I don't think so Tyler, Erik is the moviestar in the family, not me."
 "'*They* thought that kidnapping his girlfriend would result in a Billion Dollar ransom. *They* thought that he was just an ordinary businessman. *They* didn't know that they had just kidnapped the girlfriend of the worlds most dangerous assassin, *Le Mat*. *Action* *Thrills* *Romance* You will get it all in this summers blockbuster movie, Le Mat - Assassin!'" quoted Rollie from one of the trailers.

> "Best got darn work we ever did, never had a budget that large before." said Angie with a dreamy smile and a faraway look in her eyes.
 "I noticed that fast healing bit on the roof, why isn't it that fast all of the time?" asked Mulder and looked calmly at Niklas who was starting to feel a little uncomfortable, revealing a lot of things he'd rather keep a secret to everyone here. He activated the device strapped to his right wrist and a knife shot out of his sleeve and he grabbed it's hilt before it continued over the table and impaled Francis.

> "I'm don't usually heal that fast." he said and made a long cut on his left palm. "I don't bleed much as you can see, the wound patches itself up like this." he said and they all looked curiously as the blood started to coagulate right in front of them. "Healing a minor wound, such as this one. Well, it takes about an hour. Then it's as if it never happened, just a patch of nice even skin." he explained. "However, when there is a need. I can speed this process up, it is entirely possible for me to heal a gunshot wound in less then a second. But that takes quite a lot of... energy out of me though." said Niklas who wasn't quite ready to reveal that he was half Vampire as well as a Mutant and needed to feed on human blood in order to heal faster.
 "At the warehouse, you got your entire chest blown away, didn't you?" asked Scully.

> "Yeah, that was me." admitted Niklas and stroked his own chest as he remembered being suprised by one of Loubars hirelings who had emptied an entire clip in Niklas chest, causing him to crash into the warehouse through a window.
 "Do you even feel pain?" asked Mira curiously.

> "Of course. My... powers, makes it easier for me to endure it though. From the knowledge I copied in the beginning, I also got some mental tricks that enabled me to ignore pain, that is one of the things that I still have up here." he said and pointed at his head. "But I do feel pain just like everyone else."
 "Who is Duncan MacLeod?" asked Mulder suddenly and Niklas groaned within. The conversation had went into areas that he didn't want to talk about.

> +crash+
 Everyone turned towards the sound and saw a crystal vase lying on the floor in shards. Niklas just sighed and looked at

the fairies.

> "We never touched it!" claimed Cipi.
 "Never even came close!" said Sipi innocently.

> "Cross my heart and hope *you* die." said Tipi and winked at him. What Niklas found strange was that they really were to far away to have tipped that thing over, they also seemed innocent enough, he was almost prepared to believe them.
 /They really didn't do it, I did./ transmitted Erik.

> "C'mere you three." said Niklas. "I've got a job for you."
 "A job?"

> "What d'ya want us t'do?!"
 "I don't work for humans." Niklas was starting to get a little annoyed at Tipi, she really did like humans. She wouldn't admit it though, not even to herself. She had been more relaxed at the mansion, but now when there were strangers around, she had apparently taken it upon herself to act even more like a human-hating asshole then ever before.

> "Dana here is injured as you may have noticed, I would like you to fix that for her." said Niklas calmly. "Would you do it? For me? *Pleeeeeeeeeeeeease*?" he begged and went down on his knees. "I will do anything, *anything*." he cried out and put his hands together in front of him. The three fairies all giggled and Sipi didn't manage to stay airborne, she fell to the floor where she rolled around, giggling like a loon. They composed themselves and agreed. A few moments later, they hovered above Dana Scully who looked up at them in wonder, then it began.

> ~Dinaaaaai, dishanti mol a lomai.~ Dana gasped as the clear voice of Cipi penetrated the silence that had fallen upon the room. The lights slowly went out until the room was dark, the blinds on the windows pulled themselves down and the curtains moved on their own until they too covered the windows and prevented any light from entering the room. The three fairies started to glow softly in a clear golden light with a slight greenish nuance around the edges.
 "Holy..." she whispered to herself and she suddenly felt *it*. She didn't quite know what *it* was, but she felt *it* anyway. This was how she imagined that it would feel if god would suddenly turn up at her side after a prayer. The sheer power that surged from the three tiny creatures was palpable, she was quite certain that it had a physical presence here in the room. The fairies slowly joined hands and started to twirl in the air. Their wings were unmoving, spread out behind their delicate bodies. Nothing was holding them up in the air, they just floated around.

> ~Tywaii dolimina cooee, donabi tantai moliii.~ Scully gasped, the words sung by Cipi went straight into her head, she could feel how they surged through her body. She felt warm all over, a wet spot appeared on her panties as she felt sheer joy, pure love andor the power of nature flowing through her, all the way down to her toes and out into her hair.

> ~Limanai curaoni dooee, tantai tywaii donabi.~ Sipi sang something slightly different and this time Scully "saw" the creation of the universe, the big bang, stars swirling, the solar system, earth, creation of life, evolution and finally she saw this room from without herself. She looked down on them all, she saw the light glowing within their bodies, shining clearly. The fairies were simply lights glowing so strongly that she couldn't even see their bodies. Everyone had a look of wonder on their faces, everyone looked completely at peace, worried, happy and sad, all at the same time. Tears of joy and tears of sadness mixed and burst out from their eyes, their mouths were opened and unmoving.
 ~Tantai dolimina nooee, moliii donabi tantai.~ Scully felt a great sadness as Tipi started to sing, she saw destruction, corruption, nature raped and

violated, she saw into the future, saw how the universe was destructed, imploded upon itself until it was just a tiny speck in the middle of a great darkness. She felt like slitting her wrists, blowing her brains out, gulp down barrels of pills, drink oceans of alcohol, throw herself off the world trade center headfirst, anything at all just to end her worthless existence. Then she saw how the tiny speck, everything in the universe all joined together into a single pea-sized ball suddenly exploded. A second Big Bang that created a new universe, this time she also saw through the illusions, she saw the guiding hands behind it all. She saw the gods. Not the god she had been praying to, she saw *all* the gods. She knew their names, she *knew* them, she saw how their wills joined and guided the universe, she saw how they set the universe on the proper course and then leaned back to see what would happen with it. How they watched a single life starting with the same interest as they watched a world destroy itself in a pointless war that left the planet ravaged and barren. She returned to reality, back to her own head and her own eyes. The fairies were emitting glowing sparks directly from their bodies, they were slowly floating downwards, the first spark settled on her and she gasped in pleasure as she felt herself on the edge of an orgasm. Another spark settled and she gasped again, soon she convulsed in waves of pleasure as the sparks struck her over and over again. Her vision became clouded, large dark specks were floating across her field of vision. She still managed to see the fairies though as they made a slow spin around the room, making sure that some of their sparkles fell upon everyone in the room except themselves. They suddenly fell silent and slowly lowered themselves to the table where they all sat down with their backs against each other, supporting each other. The lights were turned back on, the curtains moved aside and the blinds went up. Dana trembled from her experience, everything she had seen was slowly slipping from her mind and she felt like screaming. She grieved her loss even as she forgot what it was she had seen and felt. All that was left was a faint feeling of pleasure and contentment. She forgot about the latest Big Bang and the one that would come after that. She forgot about the real gods. She forgot everything except for what she had seen with her own eyes and heard with her own ears. She couldn't remember the words the fairies had sung, but she remembered how it had felt to hear them.

> "*Oh*! *My*! *God*!" she exclaimed slowly and let out a breath she had been holding for several minutes, first now remembering to breathe in and breathe out.
 "Feels good, doesn't it?" mumbled Niklas dreamily and slumped in his chair.

> "Christ! I need a woman!" exclaimed Erik and ran out of the room, his forehead covered with sweat.
 "I know the feeling..." said Mulder and Scully didn't blame him. She was quite certain that she was sitting in a pool of her own fluids, the experience had brought her to the brink of orgasm at several occasions but never over it. She felt a need to relieve herself, she wanted a man. Any man would do, she blushed furiously and forced herself to remain still and stop wiggling on her chair in anticipation.

> "Sarah!" croaked Francis and left the hotel, bent over to conceal an impressive hardon.
 "The first time is the worst, I was damn lucky because I had been exposed to some pretty darn amazing sex not too long before. A strong will helps and some people are apparently not as affected as others, they don't know why." said Niklas and shuddered, obviously more affected then he would have liked. Scully forced herself to look around the table, Rollie and Angie were holding hands, glazed look in their eyes, sweating and obviously very disturbed by the whole experience. Palmira Sanchez had her eyes

closed, fists clenched and trembled violently. Scully saw one of her hands stray towards Rollie Tyler, but she pulled it back to her lap with a supreme effort of will. She finally turned to her partner beside her. He had his hands on his lap, one leg over the other and obviously tried to conceal the fact that he was aroused. He was sweating, had a wild look in his eyes and trembled. She forced her eyes away from him, she had almost leaped up and jumped him right then and there. She didn't know what stopped her, she wasn't even overly concerned that there were others in the room that would see them. She looked at Niklas, he also concealed his arousal and he trembled now and then, he wasn't sweating though and Scully saw an amused smile on his lips as he watched the others around the table. The fairies were still not moving, their eyes were closed, they breathed slowly and deeply. The whole thing had obviously taken a lot out of them. Scully blinked as she realized that she didn't feel pain anymore, she slowly moved her right hand over her injury and blinked again. She unbuttoned her blouse and ripped the gauze apart with a knife Niklas handed her in silence.

> "God..." she breathed as she saw her skin, unbroken, smooth and even. No trace of the wound that had been there before the fairies had started to sing. She stood up and pushed the wheelchair away, she took a step and then another one. She bent down, touched her toes and heard two strangled gasps from the table. She turned around and saw Mulder and Tyler staring at her, their eyes almost popping out of their sockets. She blushed and once again felt an urge to simply jump Mulder and use the knife she was still holding to get rid of his clothes. From the look he was giving her, he harbored similar thoughts. Oh god!/ she thought as she took a step closer to him. She closed her eyes and forced herself to calm down. /Calm! Serenity! God he is sexy! *NO*! Don't even *think* about that! Calm! Composed! The Ice Queen! Mrs. Spooky... *Shut*! *Up*!/ she screamed mentally at herself. She opened her eyes and forced herself to calmly take a chair and sit down in it. She returned the knife to Niklas, her hands trembling all the time. When he steadied her hand with his left and then took the knife with his right, she almost jumped him. Contact just made things worse, a few drops of sweat appeared on his forehead, but he didn't react in any other way.

> "I think it would be best if we all took five minutes in the showers. Or beds..." said Niklas and smiled at them all. "Whatever seems the most appropriate." Scully nodded furiously. Shower! A *cold* shower... A *long* *cold* shower... Sharing a shower with Mulder... *Stop*! *Thinking*! *About*! *Him*! *In*! *That*! *Way*!/ She got up on her feet again and ran into her room, closing the door behind her and turning on the radio rather loud before she tore off her clothes, destroying some of them in the process. She flung open her suitcase and pulled out one of her dark secrets, her secret 'friend'. She turned it on and it started to vibrate, she was suddenly glad that she had just gotten fresh batteries to it. She ran into her bathroom, turned on the shower and plunged the affectionately named 'Fox' into her body with reckless abandon. She needed to

> come, *now*!
 Rollie slumped to the floor, he hadn't even bothered to remove his clothes before he stepped into the shower. The cold water made him shiver, but he forced himself to stay right where he was. He wanted to relieve himself more than anything else, except possible relive himself *in* Angie. Rollie cried out in pain, if he had sat beside her much longer, he would have gone crazy. He had been so close, *too* close. A few more seconds and he would have raped her right there, in front of everyone. He had almost raped her! His mind was blurred with images of Angie, he had seen her grow up, he had

practically raised her ever since her father died. /How could I even think about doing what I thought about too her? God what a disgusting pervert I am! Loubar has got nothing on me... I'm the biggest, most perverted sleezebag in the world, in the universe!/ He slammed his left fist into the wall, reveling in the pain that distracted him from unclean thoughts about Angie and him having sex. Before, he had always seen them making love, not now. What he saw in his mind wasn't lovemaking, it was animalistic sex, rape, a violation of everything he believed in. He cried out again as he struck his right fist into the wall.

>
 Angie slumped to the ground after relieving herself. /Oh god!/ she thought to herself. One second longer and she would have knocked Rollie out cold, ripped his jeans apart and taken him right there in front of the others. She had been desperate enough to take 'Foxy' Mulder or Niklas Jonsson, hell she had even stared at Mira and Dana with a hungry look. She would have settled for anyone that could have given her what she wanted. /How am I going to be able to face everyone after this?/ she wondered as she climbed to her feet and allowed the water to wash over her body.

>
 Mulder was bent over on his knees in the shower. Trembling in the aftermath of his ecstasy. "Great shades of Elvis..." he murmured. He had never been that far over the edge before. When his lovely partner, Dana Katherine Scully had bent down to touch her toes, he had almost ejaculated. He had never imagined himself as a rapist before, but right there, at that moment... The only thing that had prevented him from becoming one had been the overwhelming love he felt for her. He just couldn't allow himself to violate her like that, he felt sick just for thinking about her when he had relieved himself. /How am I going to face her? How am I going to face the others?/ He had imagined her before, but not in the perverted way he had been doing now. He groaned and reached for the soap, he couldn't stay in here forever even if it was tempting.

>
 Mira jumped out of the shower with a snarl.

> "It isn't enough!" she growled furiously. She wrapped a towel around herself and stepped out into her room. She peeked through the door, the main room was empty, everyone else was still in the showers except for the fairies who snored on the table. She ran across the room, opened one of the doors and slipped inside. She looked at the mess, clothes were lying around everywhere. Not exactly what she had expected from him, but she guessed that appearances could be deceiving. Hell, that had been proved to her on more than one occasion. At the moment, she was beyond caring about that though. She didn't need him to clean her room, she had other things in mind. She sneaked into the bathroom and found him in the shower, his hands pressed against the wall as the water flowed over his lean, muscular body. She dropped the towel she was covered with to the floor, stepped into the shower, reached around his body and grabbed his erect penis in both her hands. He let out a sound that was a combination of gasp, growl and croak. "I *need* this!" she snarled and he turned around to face her. She was pleased to see that he wasn't wearing his sunglasses, his clear blue eyes looked down at her with a mixture of surprise, amusement and raw animalistic lust. She curled up against his warm body and wrapped her arms around him, trying to burrow herself into his body, trying to soak up as much as possible of him. He gasped again and she felt his throbbing length pressed against her body, she almost came again just from feeling it against her skin.
 "Mira... *Oh hell*. I have... will have a girlfriend with a little time."

> "Screw that! I *need* this!" she snapped and grabbed his erect dick again. He croaked something she couldn't make out. "It's not love, I

just need it inside of me!" She looked up into his face and hoped that she wasn't blushing. She had never acted like this in her entire life, but right now she had to have some real sex. His eyes were glazed over, he blinked like a deer caught in the headlights of a car and then growled as she tightened her grip, slowly giving "it" a squeeze. The surprise and the amusement vanished out of his eyes, now replaced only with the raw lust. She suddenly felt herself being crushed against his body as his arms snaked around her. His lips came down upon hers as he bent down to her level and then hoisted her up onto the air as he stood up straight again. She moaned into his mouth as their tongues met and got an answering groan from him. He turned them around and pressed her up against the wall, pinning her there with his own body as his hands started to roam around her body, exploring. "Just *take* me!" she pleaded and looked into his eyes.
 "I'm not *that* far gone yet." he replied and her feet suddenly touched down on the floor again. She was about to protest when he went down on his knees, slipped between her legs and gave her a fierce lick.

> "*Dios*!" she screamed over and over again as his tongue teased, licked, tickled and stroked both within and outside of her. She yelled and slammed her head against the wall, only absently noting the pain she felt in the middle of her ecstasy. She slumped after the release but was caught up in his arms before she hit the floor.
 "Always make her come first, just in case you are unable to control yourself." he quoted and looked at her, his eyes burning with desire. "Normally I would ask if you were sure about this, but I don't think I will this time, not after your entrance here..." He stepped away, trembling as he did and his eyes rolled around in their sockets from the effort. "If you want out, *run*." he croaked. She looked down between them and saw his erection, she looked up in his face with a smirk.

> "I still *need* that!" she hissed and threw herself at his stiff body. She was hoisted up into the air by his hands on her waist, with an impressive show of restraint, he slowly entered her body. A few tentative strokes followed and then Mira screamed out loud as he started to thrust violently. It hurt at first, hurt like hell as she felt him stretching her to her limit and beyond. Then the pain slowly faded away to be replaced with sheer pleasure. They were kissing again, his hands caressing her ass as he slammed into her. Her own hands were roaming all over his body without any conscious direction from her mind, it was as if they had a will of their own. He suddenly cried out and the second after that, she felt herself going over the edge and screamed in pleasure along with him. She absently noticed that they sunk down to the ground, pressed against one another, he still inside of her. She closed her eyes and let her head rest on his shoulder as he rested his on top of her head.

> Niklas opened his eyes wide open and yelped as the sensation finally penetrated his thick skull.
 "Aaaaahh!" he squealed and his left hand shot up to turn the water off.

> "Yiiiipe!" squealed Mira as well, partly in reaction to his scream but mostly in reaction to the freezingly cold water. Niklas pulled out of her and they slowly made their way back on their feet. He looked into her eyes and relaxed. He didn't find regret, but he didn't find love either. He supposed that his own eyes looked the same, he certainly didn't regret it. He hadn't had sex for quite some time so there certainly wasn't any regret except for a slight part of his mind that claimed that he should have remained faithful to Jubilee even though they weren't actually seeing each other in this time. At least not yet, he hadn't given up his hopes about that.
 "Any regrets?" he asked, more to be polite than for any other reason,

he was pretty darn good at judging people and feel what they felt.

> "No, You?" she shot back.
 "Nope." he replied and handed her a towel, he supposed she had brought the one on the floor but it had gotten wet when they were tumbling around in the shower. She gracefully accepted it and he took another one. They dried themselves in silence and walked out into his room. He rummaged through one of his bags and found what he was looking for. A large black promotional T-shirt with the text 'HawkSoft Europe, we provide what you need.' and the HawkSoft logo on it. "Here." he said and handed it to her with a smile. She looked at it and laughed out loud. He put his sunglasses back on because he was definitively starting to feel amused as well as she wrapped the towel around her waist and pulled the T-shirt over her head. He wrapped his own towel around his waist and then walked up to her. He pulled her into a friendly embrace and kissed her forehead. "Thanks." he murmured.
> "No, thank you." she replied and pulled his head down to kiss his left cheek.
 "Anytime..." he said with a huge grin on his face.

> "I might just take you up on that." she replied and chuckled. She opened the door and walked out just to be greeted with catcalls and thumbs up from the others who had already gathered out in the main room. Niklas stepped out into the doorway and bowed mockingly.
 "You're all just jealous." he said and laughed as he closed the door to avoid guffaws of outrage from the men and peals of silvery laughter from the women.

>

> Part 8, Going forth...

>
 Angie watched Niklas slip back into his room with a wide grin on his face. She giggled and got up to follow Mira back into her room. She closed the door behind her.

> "Palmira Sanchez, did you or did you not do what it sounded like you were doing?" asked Angie in a stern voice, trying to keep herself from bursting with laughter and curiosity. Mira looked at Angie with such a grin that Angie couldn't help it. She started to giggle like a little girl and Mira did the same. They embraced each other and slowly calmed down. "Well?" asked Angie finally. "Details Mira, Details! Did you see his eyes?" she asked curiously. He had been wearing the stupid sunglasses when he stood in the door, but he couldn't have been wearing them during the act, or could he? She sat down on Mira's bed and waited for her to start talking.
 "Yes I did as a matter of fact. I walked in on him while he was in the shower, he didn't have them or anything else on." she said matter of factly.

> "Andandand?" asked Angie who had been dying to know why he was wearing the stupid charcoal black sunglasses and never took them off as far as she had seen.
 "Clear blue eyes, piercing gaze that makes you feel as if you are naked. Of course, at the time I was naked so that may have something to do with it." replied Mira flippantly. Angie chuckled.

> "So, how did you end up in there with him?" asked Angie curiously.
 "I assumed you felt *it* as well after the fairies performance?" asked Mira slowly.

> "The overwhelming lust and desire? Oh my yes! I was even looking at you and Dana with a certain knowledge that you could provide... a certain relief." replied Angie and blushed furiously. She hadn't intended to reveal *that*, it had just slipped out of her.
 "I know the feeling. I assume you and Rollie..."

> "No. I did it myself in the shower." replied Angie and blushed again.
 "Me too." said Mira and blushed as well. "It wasn't enough

though. Dios!" she mumbled. "So I took a towel, wrapped it around myself and walked over to Niklas room. I sneaked into his bathroom, dropped the towel, reached around and grabbed his dick and said that I needed it." She was now red as a tomato, a silly grin on her face as she confessed. Angie was relatively certain that she was just as red, it felt as if her face was on fire.

> "You didn't?!" she managed to blurt out after a few seconds of stunned silence.
 "Oh yes. I certainly did. He protested at first, saying something about a future girlfriend but I managed to persuade him anyway." said Mira and smirked. She reminded Angie of Chiops at times when she had been stroking him for a long time, then stopped to do something else just to be reminded by his claws shooting down into her flesh just who was the boss. She would start stroking him again and then she would see that look in his little face, the look that reminded of the look on Mira's face right now. She seemed incredibly pleased with herself and sighed in contentment.

> "Palmira! I *am* shocked!" exclaimed Angie. Mira just looked at her.
 "Oh come on Angie, admit that you were just dying to do the same with Rollie. I bet that you even stepped out of your shower and almost walked over into his room at least once."

> "Three times..." admitted Angie and smiled apologetically. "*I* stepped back inside though." she said accusingly but couldn't keep a smile away from her face. "Good for you Mira, you needed that."
 "I think he did too..." mumbled Mira and then smiled. "Yeah, I did need that. I haven't felt this good since... A long time ago."

> "I assume that it was good?" asked Angie and winked at her friend.
 "Angie... It was *good*. It didn't have the 'spark', the love I shared with Michael to heighten the experience, but it wasn't necessary." said Mira with a pleased smirk and Angie felt herself blush again. "You should have continued into Rollie's room." said Mira calmly and Angie sighed. She had wanted that, wanted it more than anything else, but she just couldn't. Not now, not here, not yet.

> "I know... I guess I'm not just ready yet." she replied sadly and then changed the subject. "More details Mira!" she exclaimed. "The body?"
 "He *has* to get rid of that suit and trenchcoat, it's waste of a natural resource! A national treasure! Eyecandy..." she teased and rolled her eyes at Angie. "Stop drooling Angie, you have already gotten your hands on one natural treasure." said Mira and Angie laughed out loud.

> "Did you..." Angie left the question hanging.
 "Twice! The sheer willpower of that guy is amazing! He went down on his knees and... well, you know..." she blushed and then continued. "Then he actually stepped back and gave me a chance to pull out, his Willy throbbing for release. I laughed in his face and then..." Mira finished with a dreamy smile and Angie nodded to herself.

> "Quite a guy..."
 "Yeah, I could really fall for him in time I suppose. But I don't think it's meant to be." replied Mira slowly.

> "So you're not going to..."
 "Start dating?" asked Mira and chuckled. "No, I don't think so. This was it, unless the blasted creatures start to sing again. Damn Angie, have you ever heard or seen something like that before?" asked Mira seriously.

> "No." admitted Angie. "I don't think I ever will either." she finished and dried a few tears out of the corner of her eyes.
 "I know the feeling." replied Mira and they both embraced and started to cry.

>
 "Well, here comes the man in question. Finally." said Mulder as Niklas stepped out into the large room joining all bedrooms together. They had all heard the howls, moans and groans from his

room. Then Mira had left it, dressed in a towel and a T-shirt. Then the shower had been turned on again for a minute or two. Now he came out, wearing an impeccable dark blue suit and his ever present black sunglasses, a white shirt and a black tie. Niklas made an impressive bow, suitable for a royal court in the twelfth century and smiled.

> "Nice to know that you've missed me." he said and took a chair at the table.
 "What brought *that* about?" asked Rollie and pointed back at Niklas room.

> "Mira." he replied simply and shrugged. "She just came in and... Well, let's just say that I was *very* suprised at suddenly feeling someone grab a hold of a *very* sensitive organ commonly found on the male body. Let's just leave it at that." he said and chuckled.

"Aw, come on?" begged Mulder and got elbowed in the side from a smiling Scully. "On second thought, let's just leave it at that, shall we?" he asked and hoped to god that he wasn't blushing. He had managed to avoid looking Scully in the eyes until now, he hoped she hadn't seen what must be plain for everyone to see just by looking into his eyes. They all turned towards the door but relaxed as Erik staggered into the room, lipstick smeared all over his face and his clothes in disarray. Mulder made thumbs up at him and everyone around the table chuckled as he frowned at them and then wobbled into his room to freshen up a little.

> +beep+
 Mulder pulled out his cell phone and walked into his room. He held a brief conversation with the one in the other end and then walked out into the larger room.

> "Loubar was spotted by one of our foreign agents, he's in Iraq." he blurted out at the people gathered there. Erik stormed out of his room a few seconds later, a towel wrapped around his waist.
 "All right, I can get confirmation of that within ten minutes. If this turns out to be correct, I'm leaving for Iraq within the hour. Niklas, are you with me?" he asked and looked at Niklas who nodded calmly, seemingly unfazed by the sudden turn of events.

> "Sure thing cuz, I'm there."
 "Good, if anyone else wants to come along, fine, I can arrange that. But you've done great, you can all return to your normal lives, I can arrange so that you won't get shit for abandoning the case like this. Angie and Rollie, the brewery will have around the clock surveillance until Loubar has been apprehended, you can return without having to fear Loubar." Rollie stood up.

> "If Loubar is there, I'm coming with you." he said calmly.
 "Fine fine, talk it over. I'll take a shower while I wait for confirmation." said Erik and got back into his room, a minute later they all heard his shower starting up. Mulder took a deep breath and then looked at Scully, raising an eyebrow to question her.

> "We're going." she said and he nodded. Angie and Mira came out two minutes later and got the situation explained to them.
 "I'm with Rollie." said Angie simply and sat down beside him, taking his left hand in hers. Mulder looked at Mira who shrugged.

> "I'm going to check with Francis first." she said and walked into her room again to make the call. She returned a few minutes later and nodded. "We're going too."

> Thanks to Illyana's stepping discs, they all found themselves waiting at JFK only 30 minutes later for an airplane to arrive. They were standing outside a hanger, watching the airplanes arrive and take off. Two minutes later, a sleek jet rolled out of the hanger and they all stepped inside. Erik jumped into the pilots seat and Niklas seated himself in the co-pilots seat. It was a rather small craft, they were all sitting around an oval table with fifteen chairs around it. A few minutes later, Scully gulped down some air to lessen the pressure in her head as they took off. After ten minutes or so,

Niklas and Erik left the cockpit and joined them around the table. Erik tapped on the table for attention.
 "As you all know by now, it's been confirmed that Loubar really is in Iraq, apparently as a personal guest to Saddam himself. I've dug around a little and it seems like Loubar has done a job or two for Saddam in the past. There is an assassin around Saddam at all times, prepared to take him out if the order is given. It would be possible to make him strike out at Loubar instead, but I don't think the president will take any chances with the assassin. I've asked him, but I don't think he will give that order."

> "The president? Our president?" asked Mulder curiously.
 "Oh yes, the CIA is responsible for his or her training, they placed him/her there but the president is the only one who can give the order for our assassin to take Saddam out."

> "Our?" asked Mira. "You're with the CIA then?"
 "Not more then I'm with the FBI." he replied casually. "Or more then I'm with the NSA." he tapped on the table again and the flat black surface was suddenly replaced with a map over Saddam's palace. "Loubar is here." said Erik and pointed at a room on the edge of the palace, a red spot flashed where he pointed. He moved his finger over to a yellow spot. "Saddam."

> "Are we going after him as well?" asked Scully as she looked over the map, the palace was a bloody fortress. How are we going to pull this one off?/

> "Only for distraction." replied Erik absently. "Niklas, will you handle that little detail?"
 "Crawl through the palace and put a knife to his throat?" he asked with a smile.

> "Yes, something like that." replied Erik. Niklas raised an eyebrow and rolled his eyes.
 "Sure thing, why not?" he said and chuckled to himself.

> "Angie, how are you with 3D?" asked Erik and looked at Angie.
 "Pretty good." she replied modestly.

> "Ever used HawkSoft 3D Master System?"
 "Yeah?"

> "Can you create a model of an army camp, complete with an army milling around, forming into a somewhat organized force that charges?"
 "That will take years to render..." she warned.

> "Not with the sort of processing power you will have access too." he shot back at her. "Can you?" "Yes." she replied confidently.
 "Agents, do you have any black clothes?" asked Erik as he looked at her and Mulder.

> "Yes." she replied.
 "Yeah." replied Mulder.

> "How are you at sneaking?" he asked calmly.
 "Pretty good." she replied.

> "It's what I live and breathe for." replied Mulder casually.
 "How about a moonlight walk into Saddams palace where you will block possible escape routes and hold off any reinforcements?"

> "Our guns will alert the whole palace if we fire them." said Scully calmly.
 "I have silencers as well as a wide array of other weapons to chose from." replied Erik.

> "I think we can take care of that." said Mulder flippantly.
 "Good. Mira, Francis, how are your leadership abilities?" asked Erik.

> "We can cope." replied Mira.
 "Good, you two will be in charge of backup and security. I have called in local reinforcements to assist us. They will make sure that we can get away afterwards, I want to two of you to stay at the airfield and defend the jet with a couple of them."

> "Fine by me." replied Francis as he looked at a picture of Sarah and his children.
 "Rollie... How much do you hate Loubar?" asked Erik suddenly as he turned his attention towards Rollie. The

Australian special effects wizard looked up darkly at Niklas and Scully recoiled as she saw the hate burning in his eyes. His left hand went inside the back of his black T-shirt and emerged with a pistol.

> "This much." replied Rollie calmly. Angie gasped.
 "Rollie! You don't use guns!" she exclaimed in surprise.

> "I do now..." he mumbled in reply.
 "Can you avoid shooting him if it's possible to bring him out alive?" asked Erik.

> "I don't know..." replied Rollie. Erik looked calmly at him for a few seconds.
 "Can you handle coming along with me in an attempt to either bring Loubar back to the jet or if it's impossible, to kill him?" asked Erik. Rollie was silent for a few moments and then nodded.

> "Yes." he replied and took a calming breath. Scully saw his eyes though, they were still burning with hate. She didn't think that he would be able to control himself if he came face to face with Victor Loubar. She wondered what Loubar had done to him, the sort of hatred she saw in his eyes was something she hardly ever saw in anyone. Mulder got that some look sometimes when he faced the Smoking man or when he was protecting her. Scully had also seen it in a few other people, but it was rare, very rare.
 "Good." said Erik calmly, seemingly uncaring of the hatred burning in Tylers eyes. He looked at his watch and frowned. "They should have gone through everything found at the warehouse by now..." he mumbled and pulled out his satellite telephone from the pocket of his black trenchcoat. He dialed something on speed dial and listened. "Authorization number, 223578K, password, H75K/QZA85" he said. "Operator." he said a few seconds later. "Inventory list of everything from the Loubar raid, case 399865-642. Send in fifteen seconds." He hung up, connected the phone to a portable fax standing on a separate table next to the oval one. Twenty seconds later, it started to print something. Erik quickly browsed through it and suddenly paled.

> "What is it?" asked Scully suddenly, worried about what the bad news might be.
 "Inhibitor bullets was confiscated at the warehouse. They're not supposed to have left the factory yet, that means there's a leak. A *huge* dangerous leak."

> "'Inhibitor bullets'?" exclaimed Niklas. "As in bullets that inhibits mutant powers?"
 "Yeah."

> "Why?"
 "Mutants can be a threat, it has to be possible to neutralize a possible threat without having to use a nuclear bomb to get rid of it. Inhibitor bullets is one way, works just as good against humans as with standard rounds. But if they hit a mutant, that mutant won't be able to use his or her powers for quite some time."

> "How long?"
 "They haven't been tested yet as far as I know. It can be anything from mere hours to permanent, nobody really knows." replied Erik and sighed. "They confiscated a box of 9mm rounds, there were some missing though. We have to be prepared to face the possibility that Loubar might be packing some serious firepower here."

> "Oh well, nobody lives forever." said Niklas and sighed.
 "Oh yeah, that reminds me of something..."

>

>
 "Duncan!" Duncan MacLeod spun around and wished that they hadn't taken his sword. He relaxed as he saw Connor MacLeod, his clansman. He and Methos were being shuffled forward just like Duncan himself, their swords carried by men walking behind them, their hands twisted behind their backs and held in place with handcuffs and men with rifles guiding them along the way.

> "Connor! Adam! What is going on?" asked Duncan as all three of them

were taken into an elevator. "I have absolutely no fucking idea." replied Connor and Methos nodded in agreement. "Two men shot us down and we woke up in a couple of fancy cells along that corridor behind us. You?"
"A guy shot me in the head, I woke up in a cell over there." replied Duncan and shrugged. They were taken by the guards to a garage and stopped in front of a limousine. One of their guards looked at them for a few moments and then spoke.

> "I'm afraid that the boss has other things to take care of and he doesn't know when he will be back. His interest in the three of you have passed however. He hopes that you have enjoyed your time here and that you don't hold a grudge against him for detaining you here without your permission. I was instructed to give you this." he said and pulled out a electronic device from one of his pockets. He stuffed it down into Duncans trenchcoat. "It is a tracker, with this you will be able to locate the one who placed a tracker on you, a certain David Talbot according to what I have heard about this whole affair. I was also told to ask if these two really are your friends. If they are, we can drop you all off wherever you want. If they aren't, we'll drop you off at three different locations so there will be time to make your escapes or start the pursuit, whatever you find most appealing. Are they your friends?" he asked and looked at Duncan.
"Yes." replied Duncan slowly as he tried to figure out what all of this was about.

> "Excellent. Were do you wish to go?" he asked and looked at all three of them. Duncan told him the address of his latest hotel and he nodded. "I beg your pardon, but you will be asked to wear these black hoods until we are there so you won't be able to see where you are now. Sorry for the inconvenience." he said and slipped one of the black hoods over Duncans face. They were gently seated in the car and it slowly drove away. Duncan felt that there was a lot of turning back, going around in circles and a couple of times the whole car spun around as if they were being lifted up into the air and gently spun around by the hands of a giant. After a couple of hours, when Duncan had lost all sense of direction and was feeling slightly queasy, they finally stopped. The cuffs opened by themselves and all three of them ripped of their hoods. Their swords were lying on the seat in front of them along with their wallets, clocks and other personal belongings. A door was opened automatically and Duncan looked outside, they were standing still in front of his hotel. They all took their personal belongings, hid their swords in their trenchcoats and left the car. Duncan looked in through the front window, but there wasn't anyone in there. None the less, when they were all out, the doors closed behind them and the car drove away, all by itself.
"Well, that was a new experience. What do you suppose all this was about?" asked Methos curiously, his researchers soul interested in their capture and the reasons behind it.

> "Who gives a damn? I say, lets get some food and then we'll find Talbot!" growled Connor. Duncan nodded in agreement.
"Sounds good. But I will find out why we were captured and by whom..." he swore silently.

> "Erik Jonsson." replied Methos. "He knows about us, more then any mere mortal should know about Immortals. He doesn't seem dangerous though, he said he only involved himself in the game this time because Talbot wasn't playing fair."
"You actually talked to him?" asked Duncan with disbelief.

> "Aye, we met him two times for a short amount of time. He did threaten to reveal all Immortals if we so much as breathed a word about him."
"A threat you should take very seriously." said a cold voice and they all turned around to see a stunningly beautiful woman who had managed to sneak up on them without being noticed. She

had a trenchcoat wrapped around her body. She briefly opened it and revealed an impressive array of swords, daggers, pistols, rope, claws, grenades and even more hardware. "One wrong word and you will all lose your heads." she said with a voice that sent shivers up Duncans spine. She wrapped the trenchcoat around herself again and then walked away, vanishing among the crowds. It shouldn't be too hard finding her, but none of them made any attempt too. Despite her stunning looks, her short black hair, ebony skin and green eyes. They weren't worried about her arsenal, it was more something in the way she stood, the way she talked that made them aware of the fact that all their experience wouldn't be enough if they ever had to face off against her.

>

>
 "What about our Immortal 'friends'?" asked Niklas as he and Erik had returned to their seats in the cockpit.

> "I released them, made sure they got a tracker so they can find this Talbot guy and sent Charlene to make sure that they will keep their mouths shut." replied Erik calmly and smoothly guided the jet closer to the fueling line in front of them. Niklas briefly wondered what the crew of the American fueler must think as they got the orders to allow a small private jet to refuel over the Atlantic.
 "Charlene?" queried Niklas.

> "One of my students, one of the best. She will let them know that it's best for them to keep their mouths shut if they want to keep their heads."
 "One girl against three Immortals? She must be *good*." commented Niklas.

> "She's not much better then you are, perhaps not even as good as you..." said Erik absently. "But she more then makes up for that with her ruthlessness. She cheats and that is something she is *very* good at indeed. I'm hard pressed to keep up with her even on one of my good days and I trained her!"
 "So, what do you think, can we pull this off?" asked Niklas curiously.

> "That depends if you can do your job or not." replied Erik calmly and grunted in satisfaction as their tank started to refill with fuel from the aircraft ahead of them.
 "I can manage. Are you really going to take Loubar alive or was it just to calm down the men and women of the law back there?" asked Niklas and jerked towards the back with a thumb.

> "Loubar is going to die, that is why I'm taking Tyler with me. I figure I put a few bullets in his legs to slow him down and then Tyler can have the honor of blowing his brains out."
 "I guessed as much." said Niklas calmly. "The problem might be taking off afterwards."

> "It's a no-fly zone over Iraq, of course, they might feel pissed enough to send the airforce in pursuit after all. So I'm going to sacrifice an old vessel we would have scrapped anyway. It's already there as a matter of fact, loaded with explosives. After we have taken off, there won't be much of an airport left. With a little luck, they won't have any time to warn any other airfields that we have taken off."
 "Radar?"

> "I've mapped the area we'll be flying over, this jet has got some pretty accurate information about the stretch of land we'll be flying over. We're not going to be any higher then 2-5 meters off the ground until we're well out of Iraq. We won't have to worry about them, the Americans might be a little pissed though and the Israeli will be seriously miffed. Syria won't be much of a problem, but flying over Israel will be interesting to say the least."
 "Can't we take another route?"

> "We have to land at a friendly airfield, I can't order the Americans around too much. If I tried to redirect a fueler out of

it's preset area, all sorts of unpleasantness would occur. The closest airfield under my control is north of Tanta in Egypt, we'll be going straight for it and that route will force us to fly over Jerusalem. I think it's safe to say that we will be discovered by the Israeli, perhaps not on radar, but we'll be visually confirmed at least."

"We'll be counting on speed then?"

> "Until Egypt, yes. There I can scramble a few jets, if we're followed into Egypt, I can have our followers blasted out of the sky." said Erik with an evil grin.

"How fast can we go?"

> "Mach 4. But then we can't afford to deviate much from the route, if we do, we'll be going down with empty fuel tanks."

"Arms?"

> "A 25mm cannon and two air to air missiles is just about it. This is supposed to look like a ordinary small jet, we can't shove too much stuff into this hull and expect to get away with it."

"You can't scramble a few jets to assist us?" asked Niklas.

> "Hey, I have an organization to protect. I could, but then I'd lose a number of very valuable spies in the area. It's just one assassin we're talking about, we take him out, we get the hell away from Iraq. I close down the airfield at Tanta for a while, perhaps relocate it to some other location, at least temporarily. We just have to land, refuel and head for the Atlantic where we can get the rest of the fuel we need. I'll remove us from the American radar system and we'll be able to land at JFK who will believe that we have just arrived from Chicago because they will have tracked the transponder signal going from Chicago to New York just in time for us to arrive."

"Sounds simple enough." replied Niklas. "We just have to make sure to take care of everything in Iraq then, won't we?"

> "Yups. That sums it up pretty good."

> ***

> "What d'ya think he's doin' Frosty?" asked Jubilee from the co-pilots seat. Emma fixed her with a frown and the child fell fittingly silent. The Blackbird was running silent, total stealth. They had witnessed the small jet refueling over the Atlantic, land at some shoddy looking airfield north of Tanta in Egypt, but the sensors in the Blackbird had reported that it was equipped with hardware that made the things JFK and Logan look like toys. It was refueled again and the Blackbird followed it as it scurried over the desert sand, no more then a few meters off the ground. They were going slow, probably to preserve fuel she guessed. The Blackbird with it's Shi'ar technology still had more then enough fuel left so at least they didn't have to worry about that. When they finally landed, Emma raised an eyebrow and got **really** curious.

"Visiting Saddam are we?" she said to herself. "This is becoming more and more interesting by the minute." she mumbled.

> +Emma. Prepare for company.+ squeaked the radio suddenly and Emma frowned as she recognized the voice of Charles Xavier. She suddenly felt more minds nearby and swiftly identified them. Logan, Elisabeth, Bishop and Remy./ She wondered how they had gotten onboard and then remembered Elisabeths new ability to teleport through shadows.

> "Logan is here Jubilation." she said calmly. Jubilee gave off a squeal of delight and jumped off her seat to meet her mentor. Her empty seat was soon replaced as Elisabeth Braddock AKA Psylocke sauntered in and gracefully seated herself.

"Emma." she said respectfully and looked out through the window. "Nice view."

> "What do you want Braddock?" asked Emma although she already suspected why a group of ruthless X-men had arrived. She didn't think it was a coincidence that Charles had sent the four most violent X-men here.

"Nothing much Emma, we're just here to keep an eye on Niklas. If he behaves nicely, we'll just leave you to whatever it is you're doing. Although Charles did ask what you thought the students

were going to learn by following a member of the X-men half-way around the world. If however he should do something unfitting of an X-man..." replied Betsy and left the sentence unfinished.

> "You'll bring him back to the mansion, kicking and screaming if need be?"
 "Exactly. If someone else behaves in an unfitting manner, we might bring more then one person kicking and screaming back to the mansion." she said casually and left the cockpit without another word. Emma felt like screaming, felt like killing someone, slowly!

>

>
 Victor Loubar leaned back on the pile of pillows and slowly sipped at the tea. His eyes followed the movements of the girl dancing in front of him. She reminded him of Angela, he frowned at her and she paled visibly. She increased her efforts, doing everything in her power to please the honored guest. Loubar was worried, but he didn't want to admit it, not even to himself. He had turned away from a contract he had already accepted and received part payment for. He had spent a lot of the money as well and wouldn't be able to pay it back without using accounts that Tylers blonde bitch might know about and kept under surveillance. /Hell, she might even have closed them down!/ thought Loubar feverishly. He hadn't been doing so good in his chosen trade because he betrayed his employers. He might soon become a target himself, something he had expected for years but still wasn't prepared for. He would have to change his identity, he had been careless lately. A new face, a new name, a new handle, some new bank accounts and perhaps stay away from America for a while. He would have to postpone his revenge on Tyler, or at least give up the notion of taking revenge on him personally. He knew a lot of hitmen who would be able to do a number on Tyler, but first he somehow had to find out if his accounts were safe to use. Without money, he wouldn't last long. If his current employer found out that he had fled, he would withdraw the money in the only account Loubar trusted at the moment. The very idea was unthinkable, somehow he had to get his hands on some more cash. He didn't want to use this last account either, because if he did, his employer would find out about him for sure. Loubar still had a chance of survival, he wouldn't risk that, not until he had finished his preparations. Get hold of a good plastic surgeon, prepare a new identity and a fast escape route was top priorities to take care of before he withdrew the money from his accounts. But for the moment he was safe, who would think to look for him at the palace of Saddam Hussein? He rewarded the girl with one of his rare smiles and made a sign for her to join him on the pillows. She shivered and trembled, he supposed that she had heard the stories from the other two girls he had bedded since he arrived. Their tales wouldn't exactly inspire a burning desire to become intimate with him, but Loubar liked that. He smirked as he looked at this girl who reminded him of Angie, he would treat this girl like he had wanted to treat Angie. He had controlled himself then, kept his violent impulses in check just to make her despair even worse when she finally realized what she had been doing with whom. Pretending to be Rollie Tyler and jump into bed with his pretty assistant had been one of the more enjoyable experiences in Loubars life. He hadn't really enjoyed the sex, but the knowledge that he had fucked her with Rollies face had been priceless. He couldn't imagine *why* Tyler hadn't seen that the little slip of a girl loved him, everyone around him must have been aware of it. It was the first thing Loubar had noticed when he saw the two together. He smirked to himself as he without warning slapped the girl in front of him. He could almost picture himself doing this to Angie, he had a feeling he would enjoy himself this evening.

>

> Part 9, The confrontation...

>
 "The kid has got guts, gotta give 'im that." commented Logan as they watched the monitor showing Niklas walking up to the palace.

> "The guards aren't doing anything, perhaps he's a known guest?" asked Bishop as he frowned at the slackness of the guards. They all continued to stare and then let out a collective gasp as Niklas climbed over the gates without attracting the attention of the guards.
 "What the..." begun Emma but didn't manage to finish her sentence. "Why aren't they doing anything about him? Is he using any mutant power?" asked Emma and directed her glare at Angelo who was sitting in front of the portable Cerebro system the Blackbird was equipped with.

> "No miss Frost." he replied after a quick look at the screen.
 "It must be some sort of power gained by being a Vampire." said Betsy calmly. "I think I remember reading something about being able to move around without being noticed in his file."

> "But we're seeing him." stated Everett hesitantly.
 "Perhaps it only works on the ones he's concentrating on." said Paige hesitantly.

> "Ya're way out there, it works on everybody. But he obviously didn't activate 'is power until he was near the palace. Since we had seen 'im before he activated it, we kept seein' him but the guards didn't because they weren't aware o' the fact that he was there." Everybody turned around to stare at Jubilee who was sitting slumped in a chair, her left leg tossed over an armrest. "Don't ya look at me like that! I like read his file, okay? It's not like I'm in love with the guy or sumthin'!" The others turned around but Betsy looked at Jubilee calmly. She winked at her and smiled smugly as Jubilee blushed furiously. Not in love indeed.../ thought Elisabeth to herself and barely managed to supress a chuckle. /I just hope he doesn't turn out to be a bad guy after all./ She kept her silence and stared attentively at the monitor.

>

>
 +I'm in position.+ said Niklas voice in Mulders earpiece suddenly.

> +Erik and Rollie in position.+ responded Erik a second later.
 "Me and Scully will be in five seconds." whispered Mulder into the microphone.

> +Sanchez here, the airport is clear.+
 +Say when Mulder.+ said Eriks voice calmly. Mulder peeked in through the window, pressed the gadget he had been given against the window. A green light went on. /No alarms./ he thought and put the device in one of his many pockets. He climbed inside and did thumbs up to Scully who was positioned a little bit further away in the same corridor. He responded in kind.

> "When." he whispered.
 +All righty then, when I give the word. Get the hell out of here, Niklas, you know what to do?+

> +Keep them busy, yeahyeah I know.+
 +Angie? Is your creation ready to hit the wide screen?+

> +Ready.+
 +Hit it.+ Mulder tensed, if Loubar tried to come this way he'd end up with a slug in his head from Mulders silenced gun. Both he and Scully had choosed to stick with their regular guns with the addition of the silencers. Erik had forced them to bring a sidearm though, two silenced H&K MP5 that they wore slung over their shoulders.

>
 Niklas took a final peek and then leapt out of the ventilation shaft. He grabbed the bars before they reached the floor, landed softly and threw it on top of a couch. He walked up to the bed in the

middle of the room, looked down at the sleeping Saddam Hussein and slowly inched the barrel of his Steyr AUG up into Saddams right nostril. He placed his left hand over Saddams mouth and shook his head. The eyes of Iraq's dictator went wide open and he tried to scream. Niklas hand prevented that though, he looked Saddam in the eyes. His sunglasses temporarily located in one of his pockets just so he would be able to do this. Niklas eyes were blazing, glowing in a powerful red light.

> "Yo! Kebir Gamoose. If you move, you die. If you scream, you die. Understood?" he asked firmly and pressed the rifle even further up into the nostril. Saddam nodded furiously. Niklas nodded and removed his hand, he tried the spit of it on the cover of Saddams bed. "Well Kebir Gamoose, you and I are going to spend some quality time together. But first, you are going to make a simple phonecall. You will say only the things that I instruct you to say, do otherwise and you die. Is that understood?" asked Niklas calmly. Saddams English wasn't very good, so he made sure to speak slowly and clearly for his sake. Saddam nodded furiously again. Niklas reached for a phone on the nightstand and handed it to Saddam. He also pulled out a paper from one of his pockets and gave it to the revolting dictator. "Call the number on top and follow the script to the letter, no deviations." Saddam nodded again and Niklas watched as he dialed the correct number.
 ~Of course it's the supreme military command, why do you think I called you? Get me the highest ranking officer available, if there isn't one around, wake one up.~ snarled Saddam into the telephone. Niklas followed the conversation with the aid of a phonetic dictionary on his Mioplant, not giving any hints that he understood what Saddam was saying. A minute passed in silence and then Niklas heard a voice in the other end of the receiver. ~Finally! So you're consorting with prostitutes when you should be attacking the army of rebels gathered outside my capital! Don't just stand there, rouse the troops, get out there and defend my city!~ snapped Saddam and Niklas heard the affirmative reply in the other end. They would most likely think that their leader had gone crazy, but they would obey him. In the first light of the new day, they would see the impressive hologram of a rebel camp outside the capital.

> "Good Gamoose." said Niklas and smiled at Saddam. "Now the second number, follow the script."
 "Why do you call me large water buffalo?" complained Saddam. Niklas fixed him with a frown and he swiftly dialed the second number on the paper and ordered the palace guard to the edge of the city where they would see how the battle proceeded. His third call went to a secret weapon storage facility where they got the order to get rid of the entire stock of poison gas by dividing it up into harmless components that they should turn over to the nearest UN observation post as soon as possible. Niklas smiled. "Nice Kebir Gamoose, now you may rest for a while. Don't worry, I'll make sure nobody comes to kill you in your sleep." said Niklas with a smirk at the dictator.

>

>
 Loubar slowly got out of bed as one of his motion detectors outside the room alerted him to the fact that there was someone moving outside his room. Saddam had forbidden anyone to be near his room at night, so Loubar knew that it wasn't anyone who belonged in the palace. He grabbed the Kalashnikov on the nightstand, pulled out the safety pin of his proximity grenade and rolled it over towards the door into his room. He swiftly pulled on his black sweater and a pair of black pants, he finished by slipping into a pair of sturdy boots. He wasn't going to take any chances, there was no way that anyone could have found him already, but he hadn't become an old assassin by taking things for granted. He smiled as the lock to the

door clicked open, a second later the door was slowly pushed open. Then his grenade exploded.

> +kaboooooooooooooooooooooom+
 Loubar crouched down behind his bed and fired a volley of bullets through the wall where a good assassin would take cover.

> "*Argh*! Motherfucker!" yelled someone and groaned in pain. An American? So they *have* found me! I wonder how.../ thought Loubar and recoiled in surprise as a dark shape showed up in the doorway on the other side of the doorway. The one he hadn't fired at. "Take this you idiot!" Loubar recognized the voice. It was the same that had screamed, obviously just to lure Loubar into a false sense of security. /Not just a good assassin then. A *great* assassin!/ Loubar realized his mistake as a three bullets dug into the bed where his head had been just a second earlier. Victor didn't take any chances so he fired underneath the bed towards the assassin at the door. The dark shape moved out of the way before he had even fired his first shot though. A bullet from his barrage of return fire grazed Loubars left arm but it wasn't anything serious. Loubar saw his mysterious opponent take cover behind a marble pillar. Loubar fired his entire clip just to cover the fact that he threw a second grenade over towards the pillar with his left hand. The guy he faced must have had a sixth sense though, he threw himself away from the grenade.

> +kaboooooooooooooooooooooom+
 Loubar turned around the clip and shoved the one taped to his first into the rifle instead. His opponent had rolled into cover, leaving a faint trail of blood in his wake. Nothing could have prepared Victor for what happen next though. He sensed movement in the corner of his eye and as he turned his head around he saw Rollie Tyler in the doorway. Tyler was dressed in tight, black clothes, wore boots that looked just like Loubars own and he held a pistol in his hands. Loubar just had time to react to that strange fact when the first bullet grazed his left ear. He jumped backwards and showered the doorway with hot lead. Tyler pulled back but not before a bullet had entered his right leg.

> "Take that Rollie Tyler!" screamed Loubar, delirious with joy that he had caused Tyler more pain.
 "Take this Victor Loubar." said the cold voice belonging to Victors other opponent tonight. Victor rolled out of the way and desperately slammed his left fist down on a detonator he had connected on his right wrist. The entire north wall of his room exploded, sending a hailstorm of debris sizzling across his room. He was up on his feet in an instant and ran relentlessly. The assassin was lying motionless underneath a pile of rubble from the wall. He couldn't take any chances though, Tyler was still around and there might be more somewhere. He had to escape, after what felt like a lifetime as an assassin, Loubar knew when it was time to run for his life.

>

>
 "Can you walk?" asked an unsteady voice and Rollie Tyler opened his eyes. He slowly focused on Erik Jonsson who was leaning down in front of him. Erik winced as he looked down at Rollies leg.

> "I guess not." he sighed.
 "Can you?" asked Rollie as he took in the man in front of him. Erik was bleeding from several wounds that looked rather serious, his left arm was hanging limp and he was covered in dust. Erik nodded and frowned in concentration. Rollie suddenly felt himself being hoisted up into the air. Eriks hands were glowing slightly, surrounded by a faint yellowish glow. Rollie felt as if he was lying on a flat surface, but as he turned his head to look, he failed to see anything underneath.

> "I have too, I can't lift myself." he said and started to run, limping badly. He wrenched the pistol out of Rollies hands on the

way, Rollie was floating at his side, feeling strangely elated.

"I don't feel any pain." he slurred in Eriks direction.
> "Painkillers." said Erik simply and cursed in some language Rollie didn't recognize. "The bloody microphone is out and my Mioplant doesn't have the frequency because I was to darn lazy to see what it was! Fuck, have to do it the other way..." he said and concentrated even more deeply. *This is Erik. Get the fuck out of here, Loubar got away!/* Rollie yelled in pain as he suddenly had Eriks voice in his head, screaming at him.
>
 /This is Erik. Get the fuck out of here, Loubar got away!/ Mulder yelled and suddenly had a killer headache. He was quite sure that it hadn't been the radio, there wasn't anyone around and his ears didn't hurt. /Telepathy.../ he concluded and looked over at Scully who had her hands up at her head, cradling it.
> "Scully?" he called out, trying not to sound overprotective.

"I'm fine Mulder, let's go." she snapped and leaped out through the open window behind her. Mulder followed her example and made his way over the garden towards where the ladder over the wall waited for them. He deliberately slowed down so Scully would reach it first and waited with his back against the wall until she was over it. He shoved his gun into the holster and swiftly made his way over to the other side. Leaving a proximity grenade behind as a gift for any nosy guards that might still be hanging around. Scully waited for him on the other side, her back against the wall as she waited for him to get down.
> "Did you hear the explosion?" he asked as he got down beside her.
 "Yeah, something went wrong. Let's go." he replied and they both ran across the street over to the military truck. Francis was waving at them from the back of the truck and two Arabic men and a woman helped them get into the back of the truck. The woman leapt onto the truck after them, but the men stayed behind and pulled out guns from hidden pockets in their loose fitting robes. The woman nodded at Francis who slapped his left hand against the drivers cabin. The truck roared into action and they started to move towards the spot where they would pick up Erik and Rollie.
>
 Erik looked up at the wall and then looked at the ladder. /No fucking way that I can climb up that sucker./ he thought to himself. Lowered Rollie to the ground and then slammed a telekinetic forcefield at the wall.
> +thud+
 Several cracks in the wall appeared and a large square imprint from his attempt to break down the wall. He tried again.
> +thud+
 More cracks appeared and the old ones got larger. /Third's the charm./ he thought.
> +thud+

> Scully looked out through the back of the truck just as the wall exploded outwards. A two meter broad section of the wall just burst outwards. A five seconds later, Erik came running with Rollie floating after him. Eriks fists were glowing with a yellowish light, his face was a mask of pain and Scully saw several wounds that should have him lying on the ground, screaming in pain. Rollie floated into the truck and Erik made his way up by stepping on some sort of invisible stairway that Scully couldn't see. Erik tossed the gun he was holding to the woman and barked a command at her in some foreign language.
 "Go!" he screamed at Francis who signaled for the driver to drive. After that was finished, he slumped against the wall and groaned. "Scully. There is a black bag strapped to my left ankle, take the needle in there and inject it."
> "Where?" she asked as she retrieved the thin back he was talking about.
 "Anywhere, just make sure it goes into a vein or something." he muttered. She pulled it out and shoved it into an

outstanding vein on his neck. After twenty seconds or so he started to breathe more easily and he seemed to relax. "There, that's better. Now I only have to cope with a hardon and some pretty vivid images for the next four hours. Take the bottle in there, pour that crap over the worst of my wounds." he ordered and she followed his directions. Then she reached for the gauze and used the little there was to wrap around a bullet wound in his right shoulder.

>
 /This is Erik. Get the fuck out of here, Loubar got away!/ Niklas closed his eyes for a split second as the mental scream from Erik went through his head. /Damn! He must have been pretty darn desperate! I hope he is all right.../ thought Niklas and once again focused on Saddam still lying completely still in his bed. /It must have something to do with that explosion earlier./ He sighed, there was nothing he could do except follow his instructions. He handed Saddam a second paper and handed him a radio. A few seconds later, Saddam reported that an assassin was roaming the palace looking for him. He ordered *everybody* to get back to the palace. Niklas smiled, as the soldiers, guards and whatever was milling around trying to get to the palace. The truck would slip past, unnoticed on the other side of town, heading for the airfield. Niklas cuffed Saddam, gagged him and then pulled him up towards his own face. His eyes blazed again and he activated one of his Kindred disciplines.

> "*Panic*!" he ordered and left Saddam there in his bed, he wouldn't be fit to give any orders for at least a week. Niklas walked out onto Saddams balcony and made sure that he was securely strapped to his backpack. He grabbed the controls in front of his chest, turned it on and gave it full throttle.
 +vooooooooooooosh+

> He shot up into the air and soon located the truck. He landed somewhat softly a few hundred meters in front of it, got rid of the backpack rocket Erik had forced him to use and leapt into the back of the truck. He gasped as he saw Rollie and Erik injured and reached for a small pouch in he carried strapped to his belt. He tore it away and emptied half it's contents over Rollie and the other half over Erik. He had collected some of the fairy dust left when they had healed Scully, it still had some of it's potency. They weren't completely healed, but he thought that Rollie would be able to stand on his own and Erik would be all right with a little time to rest. The Arabic woman who guarded their backs from any followers suddenly put her left hand to her left ear and concentrated. She was listening to information through her earpiece.
 "A spy at the palace located a Neutron bomb that Victor Loubar had given to Saddam, he is at the airport and wants to know what he should do with it?" she asked in a slightly accented English.

> "Throw it into the bloody bomb." said Erik. "The blast will take care of it." The woman nodded and passed the order along to a spy who probably would have to leave the country or at least get himself a new identity. They soon arrived at the airport where Eriks underlings, dressed in uniforms that identified them as Iraqi soldiers, helped them to get into the jet. Erik shrugged off Scully's warnings and took his place in the pilots seat. He wasn't bleeding anymore and the fairy dust had done him a world of good. Niklas suddenly wished that he had brought the fairies along, but he had made them promise to return to the mansion so they wouldn't get in the way.
 "That's strange..." commented Erik without explaining himself further.

> "What?" asked Niklas.
 "The crappy aircraft, the bomb. The remote was just disconnected."

> "What?" exclaimed Niklas.
 "Don't worry about it, we made it. We're not followed." said Erik and started the engines. They moved out onto the strip when Niklas chanced a look over at the aircraft.

What he saw made him go completely pale.

> "Loubar! He's in the got darn airplane!" he exclaimed and leaped out of his seat. "Go, I'll be all right." he ordered and ran back. He opened the door and nodded at the others. "It's been a pleasure, see ya." he said and jumped outside. He slammed the door shut behind him and curled up into a ball as he struck the ground. He rolled around and then ran to get away from the exhaust of the powerful jet engines. Loubar had managed to get his plane started as well by now, he was heading out on a parallel airstrip and increased his speed. Niklas cursed to himself and gave it his best shot. He pushed himself to the limit and beyond as he tried to catch up with the moving airplane. He threw himself at the door, opened it and slipped inside.

> ***

> "What is he doing now?!" exclaimed Psylocke and stared as Niklas leaped out from the moving jet and ran over towards the much larger aircraft that had been set in motion and was preparing for take off. He got into the aircraft by a door and closed it behind him. "All right, I've seen enough of this. Let's go see what he is doing." she ordered. She reached out for the shadows and pulled Remy, Logan and Bishop with her as she stepped into the darkness.
 "No! Don't do it Jubilee!" she heard Paige scream behind her but she didn't know what was going on. Suddenly they found themselves standing in the moving airplane, among a maze of crates and barrels. The aircraft lurched as they became airborne.

> "Loubar! Don't move, don't even breathe." ordered Niklas from somewhere further ahead. They all slowly made their way towards the cockpit and the sound of Niklas voice. "I said..." screamed Niklas and suddenly stopped when something happened. Betsy felt something slam into her head and the world got blurry for a moment.

> ***

> "What the..." said Erik and fell silent as he saw the flying bomb disappear to the southeast. He heard the boom as it passed Mach one. "The stupid fucker must have found the overdrive." said Erik to himself. "The fuel won't last long with that speed." Please get your butt out of that airplane Niklas./ he thought and directed a prayer to all higher powers that might be listening to a depraved soul such as himself. He sighed and pointed the nose of the jet towards Tanta. He was responsible for getting the others back safe and sound, Niklas had to make sure that Loubar didn't get away with the Neutron bomb.

>

>
 Niklas slowly opened his eyes and instantly regretted that he had become conscious again. His left leg was one single mass of pain, he slowly looked back and winced as he saw the heavy wooden box that had crushed left leg. It effectively pinned him right where he was and the pain almost made him faint again. Something crashed down on Niklas head and he gingerly removed it.

> "A fucking parachute?" he said in disbelief and looked up. A shelf with parachutes was overhead, one of them had fallen down on his head. He shook his head and saw Loubar lying on the floor just a little bit away, he had both of his legs trapped underneath a large barrel. Loubar slowly opened his eyes and snarled as he saw Niklas. "'ello Loubar. Doesn't it feel *good* to be trapped in a moving airplane loaded with explosives?" asked Niklas and chuckled to himself. The whole got darn situation was absurd.
 "It will feel even better after I've blown your brains out." snarled Loubar and got a pistol from a shoulder holster. Niklas saw in slow motion how Loubar aimed the pistol at him and Niklas swung the parachute towards the master assassin.

> +kaboom+
 "Ahhhh!" screamed Niklas as a slug dug into his right leg, the one that hadn't been crushed under a heavy box. He saw the pistol bouncing away out of Loubars reach and sighed in relief. "We're going down together Loubar. Nobody will miss you, nobody will miss me. The world will be a much better place without us." He looked at the parachute, a hole had been made right through the bag.

> "Oh, I think I can come up with a few that might miss you at least." said a voice and Niklas turned his head around and blinked in surprise as he saw Psylocke, Wolverine, Bishop and Gambit looking down at him. But there was something strange here... Why can't I feel them? Why isn't Remy's eyes red?/ He suddenly realized why.

> "Get back! There's an inhibitor bullet in my leg, stay away if you want to keep your powers!" he screamed at them. They slowly moved back and Niklas sighed in relief as he saw Remy's eyes turn red on black again. "That's better." he said. "Now get the hell out of here. 'port Betsy." ordered Niklas firmly.
 "We won't leave you." she said just as firmly. He checked their position with the GPS, checked it on a map and shook his head.

> "Do you hear engines? No, because there isn't any fuel left. Is there anything large enough to land on out here? No there isn't. Can you come near me without loosing your powers? No you can't. Can you teleport through shadows without your powers? No you can't. Bringing me is impossible, I know it, you now know it. Get out of here while there's still time." said Niklas. "Tell the fairies to return to Gaia, thank them for all their help. I just e-mailed Erik, he will supply you guys with some medicinal equipment, Charles will receive a hundred million dollar donation to further the cause. Never give up." Niklas thought about it. "Tell Jubilee that I love her. 'nuff with the last requests. Now get your sorry asses moving, 'port outta here!"
 "How about you, you will die." said Betsy but Niklas could tell that she was almost convinced.

> "How about all of you? Go already." he said and closed his eyes. "Happy trails." he said. He heard Logan sniff once, then once again more suspiciously.
 "Jubilee's here." he said. "Wait Betsy." he said and stormed off towards the back of the aircraft. Niklas groaned and opened his eyes again. Logan soon returned with a slightly dazed but conscious Jubilee, a large lump on her forehead. "All right, let's go." he said gruffly at Betsy. She looked back at Niklas and he nodded.

> "Go." he said simply and closed his eyes again.
 "Fare thee well Niklas." she said and Niklas heard shuffling footsteps.

> "Are ya crazy? Are ya just going t'leave 'im *Oaaaaaaa*!" said Jubilee but interrupted herself with a scream. Niklas opened his eyes again just in time to see her trip over a thick rope lying on the floor. She stumbled in the direction of the door, crashed against it and it opened. Niklas gasped as he saw her fall out through the doorway. Bishop and Remy pushed a hysteric Logan into the shadows and Elisabeth brought them all into the shadows, all of them crying openly. Niklas spent the last of his remaining stock of blood, slapped the box of explosives off his leg and jumped out through the doorway after Jubilee just two seconds after she had went out through the door. His own death didn't really bother him, but he couldn't let Jubilee die as well. He tumbled out into a free fall and spun around a few turns before he managed to steady himself. He pressed the parachute to his chest, pressed his legs close together and aimed for Jubilee. She was flaying wildly, spinning around and fell slower then he did because of her constant flapping. It hadn't been so much at stake, he would have laughed out loud. How many times hadn't he just snorted when a movie or a TV-show had featured a free fall where someone caught up with someone else. The first thing that came to

mind was the James Bond movie Goldeneye where James Bond had dived over the edge of a cliff in order to catch up with a small airplane falling freely. It had seemed extremely absurd when he watched the movie, as he slowly got closer to Jubilee, it didn't seem that silly any longer. He suddenly reached his goal and managed to grab her around the waist with his right arm. He pulled her closer to him and she desperately held on to him, her arms slipping around his chest and her hands locking on his back. He awkwardly managed to slip the parachute onto his back. He looked down and abruptly decided that he didn't have time to secure it properly. His Mioplant made the calculations and he followed them, moving his body so that their feet pointed down. He knew that the main chute had a large hole through it, he was hoping that it would slow them down so much that the spare would be able to slow them down. He yanked the cord and the main chute unfolded above them. He wrapped his legs around her and desperately hugged her closer to his body with his left arm and cradled her head with his right. The sudden yank almost tore his shoulders out of whack as he wasn't exactly following the paratroopers safe jump guidebook. He looked up and got his suspicions confirmed, the main chute was worthless. It tore apart above them, but it had managed to slow them down. Niklas released it and the spare unfolded instead. This one was whole, unbroken he saw as he looked up. Another yank came and this time he heard the twin snaps as his shoulders were pulled out of their sockets.

"*AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAARRRRRRRRRRGGGGGHHHHHHHHH*!" he screamed out loud. When the crushed leg, the bullet in his other leg, his shoulders and his headache teamed up, he couldn't simply ignore the pain any longer. It overwhelmed him until every inch of his body felt nothing but pain. He forced his eyes open, they had closed on their own violation when the pain had been at it's worst. He couldn't allow himself to let go just yet, he still had work to do. /Bloody hell! I haven't been in this much pain since Jubilee and I crashed on that alien planet. I wonder what it is about us two and falling from great heights?/ he asked himself. He exhaled as he saw a small island in the middle of the blue ocean, if he could land close to that, Jubilee might be able to survive. He aimed for the ocean about five meters from shore. He nudged her. "Hey Jubes?" She pulled away her head just far enough to look at him.

> "Yeah?" she replied and he was enormously relieved to see that she hadn't fainted or anything.
 "Gee babe, I've really fallen for you." he said and chuckled despite the pain he still felt, but by now he was almost used to it, he could block it out. "You'd better be ready to let me go and start swimming Jubes, this is where I sign off." He said and waited until they were only ten meters from the water, he slipped out of the parachute, spun around so his body protected her from the coming impact. He pushed her head aside until her head and whole upper body was protected by his body. "Love you..." he murmured and felt everything turn black as his back struck the surface of the water with an enormous splash.

>

> Part 10, Epilogue...

>
 Nobody saw the large airplane slowly coming closer to the surface of the water, nobody heard the panicked scream from within as it became obvious that no miracle would save the life of Victor Loubar this time. The jolt when the airplane struck the water somehow mysteriously jolted the main detonator. It sent the signal to all other detonators, the resulting explosion baffled quite a lot of people at NASA where it showed up on one of their photographs. Nobody knew what might have caused it, it was debated whether it was a Nuclear bomb testing made by India, but the Indian government

categorically denied these rumors. Nobody knew the truth, that it was one final blast for Victor Loubar.

>

>
 "Well..." said Erik and raised his glass of Whiskey. "It's been great y'all. I hope that we will get a chance to work together again sometime in the future. If you ever need *anything*, call me. You've all got my card, don't hesitate to use it. I raise my glass in tribute to my beloved cousin, nobody could ask for a better relative or friend. To Niklas, wherever you are." said Erik and drained his glass. The others around the table did the same, draining a glass of Whiskey in tribute to the one who didn't make it back from Iraq.

> "Are you sure that Loubar croaked?" asked Agent Mulder and Erik nodded in reply.
 "Yeah, the old tub went down southwest of India, one big fireball. The guys at NASA thought that it was a nuclear bomb testing their satellites captured. But, Niklas was on that plane. I don't think he lived long enough to die in that fireball. Niklas probably tore him apart long before the plane went down. Or he might have tied him to a chair in the cockpit and glued his eyes open so he had to watch until the end." said Erik and refilled their glasses. "Since it was a bloody rapist on top of everything else, my guess is that he tortured him to death. Niklas always hated rapists." said Erik and drained his glass again. He refilled it and drained it yet again.

> "Niklas had swift healing, isn't there any chance?" asked Angie and stared dully at her second glass of Whiskey. Erik shook his head.
 "No." he slurred. "He 'ad a trackin' device in 'is 'ead. Dead. Not a beep. Nuthin'. Nada." said Erik and opened a new bottle of Whiskey. "The 'xplosion, no healin' is fast 'nuff t'cure bein' ripped t'shreds, burned t'a crisp'n sunk t'the bottom o' the ocean. Anyway, a pleasure." he said and took the bottle with him. "Stay as long as y'like, just drop the cards inna reception on y'r way outta 'ere." he slurred and staggered out through the door.

>

>
 "Well Agents." said Assistant Director Skinner as his two most troublesome Agents once again was sitting in front of his desk. He looked at their report, browsed through it again and shook his head. "Do you really expect me to believe that Victor Loubar developed mutant powers late in life, that they drove him so crazy that he started cutting peoples head off at random? Celebrating each decapitation by allowing his powers to run free? That he used a mask to make himself look as the two men who was witnessed doing this on several occasions? That he after his last murder, one... David Talbot, panicked and went off to Iraq where he boarded an old airplane loaded with bombs that somehow managed to outrun F-18's launched from two carriers in the Persian Gulf? That he died in the explosion as the plane crashed in the ocean?"

> +knock+ +knock+
 Skinner looked at the door and frowned. He had told that he didn't want to be disturbed. An agent Skinner had seen before but didn't recognize at the moment walked in and handed him a simple white paper with a few lines of text on it. He walked out again without saying anything. Skinner opened his mouth to call him back but fell silent as he read the first line on the paper.

>

> HawkTech le-fbi-1735a-dx7, Walter Skinner

> Security code: aD75xKk12

> Smile and look happy, tell them what a great job they did, dismiss them.
 Destroy this paper, defend it with your life until it is beyond salvation.

>

> Walter looked at the two, looked down on the paper and then sighed.

He didn't want to loose his life for disobeying a direct order that apparently originated from the boss himself according to the Security code that had been used. Disobeying that one meant certain death.
 "Good job Agents, dismissed." he said and reached for a paper in his 'to do' pile and started to read it, completely ignoring the two stunned Agents who slowly got up and left his office. When they had left, Skinner slowly turned the paper into confetti and stuffed it into one of his pockets and left for the bathroom where he flushed it down in two different toilets.

>

>
 "I said open the got darn box you bloody whimp!" snarled Charlene and slapped the man she only knew as the Smoking man or Cancerman so hard that he stumbled into the wall of the corridor. He went down on his knees and unsteadily opened the box she had left on the floor for him. He gasped as he opened it and came face to face with David Talbots decapitated head.

> "How..." he asked and looked up at her.
 "That is for me to know and you *not* to find out. If you ever try to meddle in the Game again, you will regret it. Oh, don't bother calling the two teams you had posted outside Agent Mulder and Agent Scully's apartments. They're all dead." said Charlene coldly. "I suggest that you leave them alone for a while if you want to continue smoking your repulsing Cancersticks. Just to make sure that you don't forget this for a while..." she said and before he was able to defend himself, he had him gagged. She slapped him again, even harder this time. She saw him blink in confusion as he went down on all fours, just the moment she had been waiting for. She pulled out two throwing knives and threw them as hard as she could. His muffled cries went on for quite some time until finally one of Pentagons security guards came upon this corridor and found an unconscious gagged man who's hands had been nailed to the floor by two nasty looking knives. Dispite an extensive search of the Pentagon, nobody found hair or hide of the woman who had done this to him.

>

>
 "What is your bed doing in the container?" asked Angie as Mira and Francis dropped them off at the brewery. They both tiredly walked over and looked into the container. Sure enough, it was his bed, his bedclothes and his pillows. Everything had been thrown into the container. Rollie didn't know who had done it, but he sure as hell was glad for it though. That meant that he had a perfectly good exuse for getting himself a new bed. One that Loubar hadn't raped Angie in.

> "Blue, open." ordered Rollie and the door unlocked itself after a command from his little robot. Angie put down the cage she kept Chiops in and opened the door. The cat slowly walked outside and stretched, apparently unfazed by the long drive. They both looked through the loft, looking for signs of intruders without finding anything. Rollie finally walked into his bedroom and stared at the new bed with a stunned look on his face. "Bloody 'ell!" he exclaimed. "Hey Ange, have you bought me a new bed?" he screamed over at her new room.
 "No!" she replied from within it. "Why do you ask?"
 > "Because someone has managed to get in, throw out the old one and installed a new one for me!" He shook his head in confusion, he hadn't done it, Angie hadn't done it, Mira and Francis had been with them in Washington. Mangela and Dingo could get inside, but he couldn't imagine anyone of them giving him a new bed. He frowned as he saw a note lying in the middle of the bed. He dropped his bags and reached for the note.

>
 I thought you might like this. Angie hated the old one just as much as you, perhaps even more. Communication is the most important

part if you want to maintain your relationship with her, don't be afraid to talk to her.

>
 Erik.

>
 PS: I'll send you the bill, I'm not made out of money. (Even if I have a lot of them. ;D) DS.

>

> Rollie shook his head, he didn't know how Erik had managed to get inside and he wasn't sure that he wanted to know it either. At the moment, he would settle for a few hours of sleep in his new bed.

> ***

> Logan looked down at the object his two hands were grasping and he choked down a sob. He wiped the tears away from his eyes with the sleeve of his shirt. His eyes slowly focused on one of her yellow jackets. She had a tendency to ruin them so he had bought her a whole closet full of identical yellow jackets just like her original one. He hugged it against his body and wished that she had been in it. He would have given anything to hear her laugh, hear her tell something that excited her so that her voice would go into overdrive until she spoke so fast that it was impossible to hear what she was saying. He was supposed to pick out a gravestone for her, it would be placed in the memorial at the mansion. He just couldn't bring himself to do it however, the time wasn't right just yet.

> "He said thanks for all your help and told you to return to Gaia, he would miss you all." said Elisabeth and looked at the fairies. They just shrugged, didn't seem overly concerned that their protector had died.
 "I think I speak for all of us..." said Cipi slowly.

> "She does!" interrupted Sipi joyfully.
 "Yeahyeah, all right..." drawled Tipi.

> "Shut up! I'm talking. I think I speak for all of us when I ask if it's all right if we stay here in his old room for a while longer?" said Cipi and looked at Betsy with her large innocent eyes.
 "I think it will be all right, you have to ask Charles to find out for certain though." replied Elisabeth Braddock and wondered why they would want to stay here, in his old room. She saw Logan storm out and jump onto his Harley, he had one of Jubilees yellow jackets tied around his neck as he headed out for yet another evening of reckless drinking and as many bar brawls he could get himself into before he got arrested. She shed a single tear, both for Jubilee and Niklas. Jubilee never really did learn to trust her and Elisabeth couldn't really blame her. When the two of them first met, Elisabeth had been a faithful servant of 'The Hand' and worked under the codename 'Lady Mandarin'. But Elisabeth had really come to like the little black-haired bundle of energy that called itself Jubilee. She hadn't known Niklas for long, but the serenity and acceptance she had seen in his eyes when he asked them to save themselves always brought tears to her eyes.

>
 "Do you think we should tell them?" asked Cipi as she stared down into the water.

> "Naah, why should we?! It will be much more fun this way!" said Sipi and giggled.
 "Let 'em suffer for a while, they will be much happier later this way." said Tipi with a cruel smile.

> "Perhaps we should go there, he might need our help." said Cipi hesitantly as she looked at the image in the water.
 "*She* said to leave him alone for a while!" said Sipi with awe in her voice as she mentioned Gaia.

> "Let's stay here, we've been flying back and forth for him, I say we just relax and have fun until they return." said Tipi. Neither of them said anything else, they just looked down at the image in the

water. Normally, it would have shown a reflection of the clear blue sky and the fairies hovering above the surface. That wasn't what it showed however, it showed a blurry image of a beach somewhere. It was possible to make out a small figure wrapped in yellow that slowly and with a great deal of effort dragged something black up onto the beach and then collapsed over the black shape when they were both out of the water.

> THE END!

> (The FX storyline continues with "Rest In Pieces Loubar...")

> (The X-files storyline continues with "The Howler of the Rockies...")
 (The Hawk storyline continues with "Robinson X...")

> <div>

End
file.